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THE WORLD'S LEADING PAINTERS

LEONARDO DA VINCI, RAPHAEL, TITIAN, RUBENS, VELASQUEZ AND REMBRANDT

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BY
GEORGE B. ROSE
Author of "*Renaissance Masters*"

WITH PORTRAITS

NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
1912

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Published April, 1912

CAMELOT PRESS, 444-46 PEARL STREET, NEW YORK

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TO MY FATHER

U. M. ROSE

WHOSE LONG LIFE HAS BEEN DEVOTED TO THE GOOD AND THE TRUE, I DEDICATE THIS UNWORTHY TRIBUTE TO THE BEAUTIFUL

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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is to present in compact form the results of the latest researches and criticism. Upon many points in the lives of the painters, and as to the authenticity of many of their works, there has been much controversy. In brief biographies it is impossible to state the conflicting arguments. The author can only consider them, and, where a result seems to be established by a fair preponderance of the evidence, state it as a fact, at the risk of being considered ignorant by those who take the contrary view. As to the authenticity of the pictures the author has accepted the opinions of the recognized experts, only venturing to express his own judgment where they are at hopeless variance. The views as to the merits of the works mentioned are the author's own, arrived at after repeated examinations of each. The only exceptions are those in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg and in some private English collections, where he has been compelled to rely on photographs and on the opinions of others. His views will be found wanting in originality. This is not for want of patient study, but because great masterpieces are apt to make the same impression on normal minds.

A complete bibliography of the subject, or even a list of the books in several languages which the author has read or consulted, would be too voluminous; but for the benefit of those who would pursue the study further a brief reference to the biographies that are to be found in English may be welcome.

For the three great Italians the Lives of Vasari are still valuable, despite their many errors; especially valuable in

the recent edition of Messrs. Hopkins and Blashfield, where, in copious notes, Vasari's mistakes are corrected and his deficiencies supplied.

Of Leonardo there is only one full life in English, that of M. Eugène Müntz; but this tells substantially all that is known of Leonardo the artist, and is most readable. Of the short lives by Rosenberg, Richter and Gronau, the last is the best, despite its brevity.

Of Raphael there are three extensive biographies, by Passavant, Müntz and Crowe and Cavalcaselle. Those by Passavant and Müntz are full, accurate and entertaining. The work of Crowe and Cavalcaselle is largely devoted to tracing the origin of the master's paintings in his drawings, and appeals rather to specialists. Of the short lives by Grimm, Knackfuss, de Quincy, d'Anvers, Strachey and Julia Cartwright, the last two are the best. Mr. Oppé has recently published a valuable critical work, with process illustrations of nearly all the master's pictures.

Of Titian there is only one full biography, that of Crowe and Cavalcaselle; but this is one of those monumental productions that supersede all that went before and form new points of departure. It is more readable than their Life of Raphael. There are also short biographies by Heath, Claude Phillips, Ricketts and Gronau. Mr. Heath's book is an abbreviation of Crowe and Cavalcaselle. Mr. Phillips' is an admirable piece of criticism written in a charming style. Mr. Ricketts' book is also highly critical, with process illustrations of substantially all the master's works. Dr. Gronau's is a happy combination of biographical detail with much sound criticism.

The great work on Rubens is that of M. de Rooses, who has given a long life to the exclusive study of the master. His immense book, however, is rather for the specialist. For the general reader that of M. Michel, also in two folio volumes, but only about half as long, is much better, telling

the master's story in most readable form with admirable judgments upon his pictures. Where his opinions differ from those of M. de Rooses they generally seem to be the sounder. There are also short biographies by Knackfuss, Kett, Dillon, Calvert, Hope Rea and Stevenson, of which the last three appear to be the best.

Of Velasquez we have in Carl Justi's great book an exhaustive presentation. The less extended, but still full, work by Señor Beruete is also admirable. The shorter lives by Armstrong, Calvert and Stevenson are most excellent; and that by Edwin Stowe is quite readable.

Of Rembrandt there is only one exhaustive biography in English, that of M. Michel; but that is equally admirable in style and in substance, and satisfies every requirement of the ordinary reader. There are shorter lives by Knackfuss, Mollett, Bell and Bréal, of which the last two seem to be preferable.

The Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt has issued at a very moderate cost volumes each of which contains process reproductions of all the works of one of the masters. The titles of the pictures are given in English.

Books dealing with the general subject of painting and throwing light on the works of the painters treated here are of course too numerous to mention. There are also various biographies that are too antiquated to be of practical value, and perhaps some very late ones that the author has not read.

The space allotted does not permit a reference to all the pictures of the masters treated. A mere catalogue of their works would make a book almost as large as this. The author can refer only to such of them as seem best to illustrate the development of the artists' genius, preferring those that are in public galleries accessible to all. Each reader will be disappointed that some favorite of his been passed over in silence; but this is inevitable.

G. B. R.

CONTENTS

LEONARDO DA VINCI — PAGE

I Childhood and Youth 3
II At the Court of Il Moro 22
III Later Days 40

RAPHAEL

I Umbria and Florence 64
II Roman Days 90

TITIAN

I Early Years 127
II The Painter of Princes 142
III A Marvellous Old Age 169

RUBENS

I Early Days 183
II In Southern Lands 190
III Return to Antwerp and First Marriage 204
IV Wandering Years 233
V Second Marriage and Later Days 239

VELASQUEZ

I The Realist 254
II The Decorator 275
III The Impressionist 288

REMBRANDT

I Early Years 305
II Golden Days 316
III Deepening Shadows 335

INDEX 359

PORTRAITS

Leonardo da Vinci . . . . . *Frontispiece*
Raphael 64
Titian 127
Rubens 183
Velasquez 254
Rembrandt 305

THE WORLD'S LEADING PAINTERS

LEONARDO DA VINCI

1452–1519

I

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

THE greatest mind ever devoted to art, probably the greatest ever devoted to science, was Leonardo da Vinci, the natural son of a Florentine notary.

The village of Vinci, from which his family derived its name, is perched upon a hill-top not far from Empoli, some twenty miles west of Florence. To the south is the narrow but fertile valley of the Arno, to the north a wilderness of broken hills which lead the eye from summit to summit until they merge into the majestic mass of Monte Albano. The region is too poor for the cultivation of grain, and the hardy peasants get their meager subsistence from the vine and the olive, which cling to the hill-sides wherever they can find a footing. It is a hard life that they lead, saving by means of terraces what little soil nature has bestowed upon them, and slowly enriching it from father to son. But if their life is hard, it is extremely healthy, and the inhabitants of the region are a wholesome, honest and rugged people.

Their dwellings of stone and stucco, colored in agreeable tones of pink and yellow, are not unpleasing to the eye; but within they are bare and cheerless to the last degree. The furniture is plain and scanty, limited to the merest necessaries of existence, the beds hard, the seats uncomfortable, the walls naked; and cold as are the winters of Tus-

cany, no provision is made for heating save a brazier where smolder a few pieces of charcoal to thaw the hands when too stiff to work.

Things change little in the Tuscan mountains; and it is probable that there has been no visible alteration in the aspect of Vinci since Leonardo's birth; and that if his spirit could revisit the glimpses of the moon he would not realize the lapse of time, and would wonder why his old acquaintances were no longer to be found in their accustomed haunts. Only the costume of the peasants has lost its picturesqueness, while the grim old fortress that lowers above the town, no longer filled with a garrison of mercenaries in the service of the Republic, is slowly falling to decay. In all likelihood the house in which Leonardo was born is still standing, but we know not where it is; not even whether it was in the narrow, crooked and ill-kept streets of the town, clinging like a wasp-nest to the top of the hill, or in one of the adjacent olive orchards or vineyards.

Leonardo's grandfather, Ser Antonio, was also a notary; "Ser" being the title bestowed on gentlemen of the legal profession. In Florence, as in other Latin countries, the position of notary was not the insignificant one that it is in English-speaking lands. It was analogous to that of an English solicitor. The notaries not only attested deeds, wills and important commercial transactions; they prepared the instruments themselves; and as there were no registry offices in those days, title papers of all kinds were left with the notary of the family. The position was therefore one of importance and permanent in its character. The notary was apt to be the friend and adviser of his clients, and the office most frequently descended from father to son. Thus, of the five ancestors of Leonardo that are known to us, four were notaries.

The family probably had its origin at Vinci. At any rate, in the town or its environs, Ser Antonio had a house,

where he spent a portion of the year. Most probably, like the majority of his countrymen, he removed thither in the autumn to superintend the gathering of the grapes and olives, the making of the wine and oil. It must have been an unpretentious establishment, for he had no servants save a single maid of all work. What lands were appurtenant to the dwelling we do not know. Like most Tuscan land, it was no doubt cultivated on shares, so that the farmers were not reckoned as servants. We have no reason to suppose that the dwelling differed from the bare, cheerless homes that we find at Vinci to-day.

Hither, in the year 1451, came Ser Piero da Vinci, Antonio's son, then a youth of twenty-four, most likely for the vintage, and here he met a peasant girl of whom we know nothing save that her name was Catarina. We know not whether she was fair to look upon or of unusual intelligence. We only know that she found favor in Piero's eyes, and that the next year she bore him a son who was destined to be one of the world's wonders.

The connection was not of long duration, for in the year of Leonardo's birth, Piero wedded Albiera di Giovanna Amadori, and not long afterwards Catarina married a peasant who rejoiced in the name of Accartabrigha di Piero del Vaccha. Probably the worthy peasant objected to bringing up the son of another man. At any rate, Catarina turned the young Leonardo over to his father, who carried him to Florence. If the boy was of the age of discretion we know that he wept to leave his mother and the bright Tuscan hills, to be immured within the gloomy walls of the medieval city.

At this time Ser Antonio dwelt in a house on the Piazza San Firenze, close by the Palazzo Vecchio, where now stands the noble Palazzo Gondi. He lived after the patriarchal Italian fashion. He was an old man of seventy-nine at the time of Leonardo's birth. With him were his wife of fifty-

eight, and his two sons, Piero and Francesco. The old people seemed to have welcomed the little waif, as did also the bride of Piero. She was childless, and it was natural that she should have loved the boy, who was beautiful as an angel, wonderfully intelligent, and of so sweet a disposition that he won every heart.

All authorities are agreed as to the marvelous beauty of Leonardo. Nature showered upon him every gift. Of a little more than the average height, he was perfectly formed and graceful in every movement. His face was faultless in its contour, and the golden locks that hung luxuriously about his shoulders made him look like Phœbus Apollo. Of a sweet and loving temper, he was kind and generous to all he met, and long before societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals were dreamed of, he loved everything that had life. It is not surprising that this wonderful love-child was welcome in the home of his grandparents. Of how his childhood days were spent we know nothing. He has left behind him some five thousand pages of closely written manuscript; but scarcely does he refer to his family or to himself. There is this curious note, however: "The first remembrance of my childhood is that as I lay in my cradle a kite came flying to me, and opened my mouth with his tail, wherewith he smote me many times on the lips"; doubtless one of those early dreams which are so vivid that in after years we can scarcely distinguish them from reality.

Nothing in heredity can account for Leonardo's greatness. A more prosaic pursuit than that of a notary cannot be imagined — a life passed among dry parchments, preparing with dogged patience the tedious legal documents of the time, written slowly and painfully upon costly sheepskin with a quill pen. Such a pursuit was calculated to dry up every poetic instinct of the heart; and we have no reason to believe that any of Leonardo's ancestors was above his business. As for Catarina, she was no doubt an ordinary

peasant girl; and her willingness to part with her wonderful child, out of whose life she seems then to have passed until the hour of her death, does not indicate much sensibility. One of Leonardo's nephews was a respectable sculptor; but otherwise the family was unknown to fame, and while it still survives, it has sunk into the peasant class. Leonardo was like some splendid comet which comes unheralded from the depths of space, only to be swallowed up again in its limitless abysm. Yet perhaps a notarial origin is not so unfavorable to genius as it would seem; for Masaccio, who rescued art from formalism, and breathed into it the breath of life, and Brunelleschi, who reared the miraculous dome of Santa Maria del Fiore, and designed the stern majesty of the Pitti Palace, were both the sons of notaries.

At what age Leonardo turned his attention to art we do not know. Artists are born with the prehensile eye and the cunning hand; and doubtless in earliest boyhood his talents were apparent. Vasari says that when Leonardo was a child his father took some of his drawings to his friend Andrea del Verrocchio, and asked him whether the boy had an aptitude for art; and that Andrea, perceiving the merits of the sketches, accepted him as a pupil. This was probably when he was not less than ten years of age, and not more than fifteen. At that time the custom was for the master to take the pupil as an apprentice for from two to six years, during which period he lived in the master's house, usually paying for his board and instruction. At the end of his apprenticeship, if his work was acceptable, the master commonly retained him as an assistant, paying him modest wages until he established an independent position.

It is likely, however, that Leonardo remained at home, only spending his days in the studio of Verrocchio. An only child of such surpassing beauty and such sweetness of temper, it is not probable that the family would have let him take up his abode beneath another roof in the same city.

So far as the records show, he continued to live with his father until he was twenty-three.

Verrocchio's position as an artist is one of the problems of contemporary criticism. In the old days he was esteemed a worthy master, who did much good work, and who assisted in the production of one of art's great achievements, the equestrian statue of Colleone in Venice. Of late, however, certain critics, by assigning to him a great number of works which he perhaps never saw, have raised him to a place amongst the foremost artists of all time. Those who are curious to study this view of his position had best turn to the excellent volume upon his life recently published by Miss Cruttwell.

However that may be, at the time when Leonardo entered his studio, Verrocchio was as yet a man of modest accomplishment. Like so many Florentine masters, he had started in life as a goldsmith, and he had only recently opened a studio as a painter and sculptor. There must have been something striking in his personality, for he seems to have been recognized as a man of mark from the first, and his studio was full of pupils. Perugino is said to have been with him about the time when Leonardo was admitted; but if so, the master's training had no visible influence on the disciple's style. Lorenzo di Credi became a pupil while Leonardo was with Verrocchio, and remained with the master until Verrocchio's death in 1488. The gracious Fiorenzo di Lorenzo was also probably a fellow-worker with Leonardo in Verrocchio's shop.

One of the strangest phenomena in the history of art is the versatility of the men of Florence. Giotto was the father of painting, and he was also the architect of the most beautiful tower ever reared by the hand of man, that Campanile which would be a worthy ornament to the streets of Heaven; and he was one of the best sculptors of the time. His example was followed by most of his successors,

who usually practised all the arts of design; and the school culminated in Michelangelo, whose *Moses,* whose *David* and whose *Tombs of the Medici* are the mightiest of modern statues, whose *Creation of Man* is, after Leonardo's *Last Supper,* the most majestic of pictures, and whose dome of St. Peter's is the greatest triumph of modern architecture. But this fusion of the arts was not without its disadvantages. Painting lost the suavity of Umbria, the splendor of Venice, and became somewhat hard, with over-accented outlines, while sculpture was apt to soften into pictures in stone or metal, like Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise. Verrocchio was one of these universal masters, though his genius and his training as a goldsmith led him rather to sculpture than to painting.

Of Leonardo's life with Verrocchio we know nothing. It must have been satisfactory, however; for when, at the age of twenty, Leonardo was in 1472 admitted to the guild of painters, he still remained with his master, and probably did not leave him until the demands of patrons compelled him to set up for himself. Vasari says that he painted one of the angels in the picture of the *Baptism of Christ* that Verrocchio made for San Salvi, and which is now in the Academy at Florence; and that when Verrocchio saw how far his pupil's work surpassed his own, he renounced the brush forever, devoting himself thenceforth to sculpture. The last part of the story is apparently untrue, and the members of the Verrocchio cult indignantly deny it all. Still, it seems to me that the angel in question comes from a hand more skilful and a mind more exquisite than do the Christ and the St. John; and like the majority of those who examine it, I see in this angel and in other parts of the picture the cunning hand of Leonardo. It seems incredible that the man who painted the hard face of the Baptist could have painted this lovely angel.

It is probable that his master learned far more from

Leonardo than he taught. Admitting that Verrocchio created all the masterpieces which his partisans now attribute to his brush and chisel, they were all produced after his association with his wonderful pupil. We know that Leonardo was one of the most powerful and original of men. If the works that are now given to Verrocchio are indeed his, most of them are strangely like those of the greater master; and as Verrocchio was only seventeen years older than Leonardo, he was not too old to learn. He taught Leonardo how to mix paint and to apply it in the good, honest Florentine fashion, and he showed him how to hew marble and to cast bronze; but there were many things of which he had never dreamed that were revealed to his pupil's piercing vision. We know from Leonardo's "Treatise on Painting" that his constant advice was to go straight to nature as the supreme master, avoiding the mannerism that follows the imitation of another's work.

Unlike other artists, Leonardo seems to have had no period of immaturity when he was groping after methods of self-expression. Everything that we have from his brush or pencil seems the work of a finished master. Brilliant as was Raphael, he has left behind him much that bespeaks youth and inexperience; and all other artists tell something of the same tale. But as Minerva sprang fully armed from the head of Jove, so Leonardo seems to have mastered all the difficulties of his craft without an effort. I do not mean that his style did not change; that he did not grow in freedom and power; but unless the small *Annunciation* of the Louvre is his, there is nothing from his hand that speaks of a youth groping his way. His earlier efforts are not equal to those of his prime, but they are not immature.

However valuable the teaching of Verrocchio may have been, it was but an element in the varied instruction that came from breathing the air of Florence at that happy time. When Leonardo came to live there, Cosmo de' Medici, Pater

Patriae, was at the height of his power, ruling in serene wisdom, surrounded by such a galaxy of artists, scholars and poets as the world has rarely seen. That movement, so justly called the Renaissance, the New Birth, was in its full swing. The glories of Greek art and literature had been revealed to men. Minds were in a fever of excitement, bubbling over with enthusiasm for the new learning; and yet, while they emulated one another in extolling the greatness of Grecian art, they retained that firm grasp of the reality about them that preserved them from slavish imitation of the masterpieces of the past. Donatello did not die until Leonardo was fourteen, and his powerful realism saved the art of his countrymen from turning to ancient models. Fra Angelico died when Leonardo was three years of age, but the walls of San Marco were glowing with his rainbow hues. Fra Filippo Lippi was in his prime, now running away with a nun, now covering the walls of Florence with pictures whose charm is perennial, and which are yet faithful transcripts of the life about him. Botticelli, the master of the graceful line, the exquisite genius whose refined medieval soul sought so earnestly and so ineffectually to grasp the spirit of Greek culture, the only contemporary artist whom Leonardo mentions in the "Treatise on Painting," calling him affectionately "il nostro Botticelli," was five years Leonardo's senior, and must have been a delightful and inspiring companion. Benozzo Gozzoli, with his romantic and fanciful scenes, was at his best. Luca and Andrea della Robbia were at the height of their powers, and from their busy work-shop there poured forth those marvelous terra cottas that have been the joy of all succeeding ages. Ghirlandajo was three years Leonardo's senior, and his strong, sincere, efficient talent was making itself felt. The exquisite decorative sculptors, Mino da Fiesole, Cosimo Rosselli and Desiderio da Settignano were filling the churches of Florence with their lovely shrines and tombs.

Ghiberti's gates of Paradise were still new. The brothers San Gallo were in the full course of their career as architects. The Pollajuoli were making their hard but powerful studies in anatomy. Perugino spent much of his time in Florence, revealing all the gentle sweetness, the serene piety and the entrancing landscapes of Umbria, so spacious and so full of the peace that passeth understanding.

Many another artist worthy of note was there, forming such an artistic atmosphere as the world had never seen since the sun of Pericles set in the gloom of the Spartan war. But the greatest inspiration of all came from the young Lorenzo, three years the senior of Leonardo, the leader in all courtly pageants, the friend and companion of scholars, poets and artists, who was already displaying those rare qualities that were to earn for him his title of "the Magnificent."

Life in those Renaissance days was not only intense, but individual to an almost unexampled degree. The fetters of custom and observance, which had bound men so tightly during the Middle Ages, were cast aside, and they reveled in a freedom that was almost without control. Instead of conforming to a uniform standard, each man sought to develop his own faculties along his own lines, to be most completely himself. The result was that the scene was crowded with interesting and original personalities.

The life of the art students of Florence was turbulent and ungoverned, full of practical jokes and gay festivals, not unlike the life of the Latin Quarter to-day. The young men did an immense amount of hard work; but they found relaxation in revels that were not always seemly. The fact that the young Leonardo was arraigned, along with two companions, for an infamous crime, proves, though they were honorably acquitted, that his way of living was not above suspicion. But despite an occasional aberration, he must have applied himself to his work with a truly Hercu-

lean energy, else he could never have mastered the various arts, crafts and sciences of which he speaks in the remarkable letter to Lodovico il Moro that will be referred to in its proper place.

And so he passed his young days in the happiest of surroundings, in the conditions most favorable for the development of his genius. His stepmother died, and in 1465 his father married Francesca di Ser Giuliano Lanfredini. She, too, proved childless; and so the home still remained a pleasant one for the beautiful youth, who must have won the heart of its new mistress. But she, too, passed away, and Ser Piero chose for a third companion Margherita di Francesco di Jacopo di Guglielmo. She promptly presented him a son, and then the heart of the stepmother turned against Leonardo. She could not bear that this glorious bird of Paradise should overshadow her barn-yard fowl, and she made the home so unhappy that Leonardo was compelled to leave it forever. She bore five children to the worthy notary, and a fourth wife bore him six more. These women may have had the power to alienate, at least in some measure, the affections of Ser Piero from the wonderful child of his love; for though he lived long and accumulated a large estate, we hear of no further relations with Leonardo save one kindly letter, and on his death he seems to have made no provision for his first-born.

Thus, at the age of twenty-three or -four, Leonardo found himself alone in the world, forgotten by his mother in her humble peasant's cottage, turned out of doors by the smug notary at the bidding of a jealous stepmother.

He was already a finished artist. The landscape drawing of the Uffizi dated 1473 is masterly, and is probably the first pure landscape — the first landscape without figures — made in modern times. And if Vasari's story of the *Medusa* is true, he must, before he left his father's roof, have attained great technical mastery. It is as follows:

"It is related that Ser Piero da Vinci, being at his country house, was there visited by one of the peasants on his estate, who, having cut down a fig-tree on his farm, had made a shield from part of it with his own hands, and then brought it to Ser Piero, begging that he would be pleased to cause the same to be painted for him in Florence. This the latter very willingly promised to do, the countryman having great skill in taking birds and in fishing, and being often very serviceable to Ser Piero in such matters. Having taken the shield with him to Florence therefore, without saying anything to Leonardo as to whom it was for, he desired the latter to paint something upon it. Accordingly, he one day took it in hand, but finding it crooked, coarse and badly made, he straightened it at the fire, and giving it to a turner, it was brought back to him smooth and delicately rounded, instead of the rude and shapeless form in which he had received it. He then covered it with gypsum, and having prepared it to his liking, he began to consider what he could paint upon it that might best and most effectually terrify whomsoever might approach it, producing the same effect with that formerly attributed to the head of Medusa. For this purpose, therefore, Leonardo carried to one of his rooms, into which no one but himself ever entered, a number of lizards, hedgehogs, newts, serpents, dragon-flies, locusts, bats, glow-worms, and every other sort of strange animal of similar kind on which he could lay his hands; from this assemblage, variously adapted and joined together, he formed a hideous and appalling monster, breathing poison and flames, and surrounded by an atmosphere of fire; this he caused to issue from a dark and rifted rock, with poison reeking from the cavernous throat, flames darting from the eyes, and vapors rising from the nostrils in such sort that the result was indeed a most fearful and monstrous creature; at this he labored until the odors arising from all those dead animals filled the room with a mortal fetor, to which the zeal of Leonardo and the love which he bore to art rendered him insensible or indifferent. When his work, which neither the countryman nor Ser Piero any longer inquired for, was completed, Leonardo went to his father and told him that he might

send for the shield at his earliest convenience, since so far as he was concerned, the work was finished; Ser Piero went accordingly one morning to the room for the shield, and having knocked at the door, Leonardo opened it to him, telling him nevertheless to wait a little without, and having returned into the room he placed the shield on the easel, and shading the window so that the light falling on the painting was somewhat dimmed, he made Ser Piero step within to look at it. But the latter, not expecting any such thing, drew back, startled at the first glance, not supposing that to be the shield, or believing the monster he beheld to be a painting, he therefore turned to rush out, but Leonardo withheld him, saying:—The shield will serve the purpose for which it has been executed, take it therefore and carry it away, for this is the effect it was designed to produce. The work seemed something more than wonderful to Ser Piero, and he highly commended the fanciful idea of Leonardo, but he afterwards silently bought from a merchant another shield, whereon there was painted a heart transfixed with an arrow, and this he gave to the countryman, who considered himself obliged to him for it to the end of his life. Some time after Ser Piero secretly sold the shield painted by Leonardo to certain merchants for one hundred ducats, and it subsequently fell into the hands of the Duke of Milan, sold to him by the same merchants for three hundred ducats."

It was probably in these younger days, too, that Leonardo painted that other version of the *Medusa* of which Vasari speaks, and which was like the picture that now hangs in the Uffizi. Practically all connoisseurs are now agreed that this is only a copy, or, more likely, a picture painted from Vasari's description. But no two of them can agree as to when or by whom it was painted. Some say that it was in the sixteenth century, some that it was in the seventeenth. Others even affirm that it is the work of a Fleming. Yet it is hard to escape its history. Such a picture by Leonardo was certainly in the possession of Cosimo I. This is proved

not merely by a contemporary witness, but by the official catalogue. Why should the art-loving Grand Dukes of Tuscany have sent away one of the most precious gems of their collection and replaced it by a copy? I confess that the picture looks to me of later date; but few things were impossible to Leonardo, and I yet hope to see this strange and fascinating work restored to him.

The inscription upon the landscape drawing of which we have spoken proves that Leonardo had already in his youth adopted that singular way of writing from right to left which has been one of the world's great misfortunes. Had he written in the normal manner, the progress of science would have been advanced at least a hundred years; for a thousand secrets which men have since wrested from nature with infinite toil lie hidden in those wonderful manuscripts, many of which still remain undeciphered, though learned men have struggled long to find their meaning. Leonardo made more discoveries in science than any man that ever lived; but he published not one line, and it is doubtful whether he ever mentioned many of the most important of them to a single individual, content to write them down in these strange volumes, where they were more securely hidden than when in Nature's breast. It has been suggested that Leonardo learned this way of writing during a lengthy journey that he is supposed to have taken through the East; but this landscape shows that he had devised it in his youth. That he was left-handed may have been the cause, though the world is full of left-handed people who write in the normal manner.

At the time when Leonardo quitted the paternal home he was perhaps Nature's masterpiece in the making of a man. He was so strong that he could twist a horse-shoe with his naked hands; so active that standing with his feet together he could leap upon a horse; so beautiful that every eye followed him as he passed along; and he was possessed of such

rare powers of persuasion that, as Vasari says, everyone answered "Yes" or "No" as he desired. He must have been a sore trial to the ladies of Florence. A being so supremely gifted must have awakened the tender passion in many breasts; but he seems to have been completely insensible to woman's blandishments. Even the gossip-loving Vasari can find no story to tell of his love for woman. Michelangelo was equally insensible; but his homely person and morose manner naturally repelled the sex, while his art is essentially masculine. Leonardo, on the other hand, was beautiful in person and gracious in manner, and he loved to depict the charms of woman; perhaps no one has ever seen so deeply into the female heart, presenting his women with such subtle skill that we linger before the pictures, studying the secret of their personality as if they were alive.

Not only was he a master of painting and sculpture; not only did he have a comprehension of nature without parallel, understanding without an effort her profoundest mysteries which men have since re-discovered bit by bit with infinite labor; he was also a great musician and an inspired improviser, playing upon the lute with exquisite skill and singing with a delightful voice songs that he himself composed.

His writings are the most impersonal that the world has ever seen. No trace of emotion is ever to be discovered upon their pages. Even the death of his father is noted without a word of comment. But his heart was as tender as a woman's, infinitely patient with the faults of others. He was so indulgent to his servants that they abused his kindness, and his love for animals amounted to a passion. In the market-place he would buy the poor winged songsters, and opening their cages, would rejoice to see them fly away. Andrea Corsali, writing from India to the younger Giuliano de' Medici, tells him that the people of that country allowed

no injury to be done to any living creature, "like our own Leonardo da Vinci;" he also says that they, too, like Leonardo, ate not the meat of slaughtered animals; thus revealing to us that Leonardo was a vegetarian, perhaps the first of European blood who ever refrained from eating flesh because he loved the dumb brute and objected to its sacrifice. He was a passionate lover of horses, breeding and training them with great skill. It is said that the wildest horse would submit to his gaze, would cease its plunging, and stand before him trembling. Always improvident and over-generous, he was often in straits for money; but however poor he might be, he kept his horses. From them he made innumerable drawings, showing them in motion and at rest, and experts declare that these drawings reveal a mastery of equine anatomy unexampled in the history of art.

Had Leonardo's talents been distributed among a dozen men, we should have had a dozen masters of great achievement. But they were too many for one man. Human life is limited, and the hours of the day are few. No matter what Leonardo was doing, he thought of a thousand other things that he wanted to do; and so he was dragged from one thing to another by the restless force of his mind, leaving nothing complete. He was one of the supreme masters of art. Everything that he touched bears the mark of genius; but scarcely anything was finished.

This instability of purpose revealed itself from the beginning. On January 10, 1478, the government let to Leonardo the contract for the painting of the altarpiece in the chapel of St. Bernard in the Palazzo Vecchio, at the same time canceling its engagement with Pietro Pollaiuolo. This was one of the most important commissions that could have been assigned to a painter, and one would suppose that a young artist of twenty-six would have thrown himself into the work with enthusiasm, and have finished it once. In point of fact, Leonardo seems never to have got beyond the pre-

liminary studies, and finally, after years of waiting, the work was taken from him and given to Ghirlandajo.

Again, in July, 1481, he undertook an altarpiece for the monks of San Donato a Scopeto, and received considerable payments in advance. He made a beginning, which is generally conceded to be the *Adoration of the Kings* in the Uffizi, a masterly work in monochrome tempera upon a chalk ground, characterized by wonderful variety and vitality in the heads and forms; but neither by scolding nor supplication could the worthy monks induce him to complete the picture, and finally, after fifteen years of waiting, they had to turn the commission over to Filippino Lippi. Yet Leonardo did an immense amount of labor in preparation. We still have a great number of his marvelous studies, and many no doubt have been lost.

The very recent researches of M. Salomon Reinach have proved that the *Madonna of the Rocks* in the Louvre was painted before Leonardo left Florence, and that the still more beautiful replica in the National Gallery was ordered by the Milanese monks while he was still in that city, though it was not delivered until 1492. They ordered a Madonna with two prophets; but were no doubt glad to get the glorious work that is the pride of the great English Collection. Already in the Louvre picture Leonardo proves himself the marvelous master of light and shade and of delicate human expression that we know, though there is in the work a certain hardness of drawing that disappears utterly in the later replica. We owe a debt of gratitude to M. Reinach not only for establishing irrefutably the genuineness of the great London picture which it has seemed to many of us a profanation to question, but for settling a controversy that has raged for years with most unnecessary acrimony.

In painting these pictures Leonardo proceeded in his usual way, making for them innumerable drawings, which still

survive to tell how conscientiously he sought perfection, how earnestly he strove for the most appropriate presentation of his subject. He was the greatest of draughtsmen. His drawings have not the fierce directness of Michelangelo's; but they have a purity of line, a suppleness, a delightful softness and charm that are unequaled in the realm of art. Some of them are the ordinary short-hand notes of a painter; but great numbers of them are finished pictures of ravishing beauty and of a subtle fascination that is without example.

In the *Madonna of the Rocks* the mighty revolution that Leonardo wrought in the painter's art first becomes fully apparent — a revolution so great that it has converted all his predecessors into primitives. He is not only modern, but he is a master unexcelled in all the ages. Beneath his magic brush the old crude colors, the old hard lines, vanish, and are replaced by an infinite softness and truth to nature. The features are rounded as in life; they are bathed in atmosphere; all the resources of light and shade are expended upon them. Leonardo was not the inventer of chiaroscuro, but he was the first to handle it as a master. None has surpassed him in its use. Correggio and Rembrandt are more striking, but not more true. With the painting of the *Madonna of the Rocks* modern art began.

In this picture Leonardo first exhibited in full measure that love for fantastic rocks piled in incredible shapes that form the background of most of his pictures. They cannot be called an entire success. Certainly they do not compare in loveliness with the smiling landscapes of Perugino or Raphael. They are curious rather than beautiful. But in the charm, the grace, the sweet humanity of the figures, in the masterly handling of the paint, he far surpasses all who preceded him; nor has he been since outdone.

If Dr. Bode and other competent critics are correct, and if the lovely *Annunciation* of the Uffizi is rightly attributed

to Leonardo, as seems true to me, then there was another picture which about this time he finished to an ultimate perfection. Certainly it appears more reasonable to give this exquisite masterpiece to Leonardo, who created many other things of equal beauty, than to suppose that Verrocchio, Lorenzo di Credi or Ridolfo Ghirlandajo had one such inspiration.

Even if we add the small *Annunciation* of the Louvre, which Morelli and other distinguished authorities give to Leonardo as a work of his early youth, the output is strangely small for the twelve years of his artistic endeavor before quitting Florence. Several bas-reliefs have been identified by various experts as Leonardo's, and if so, they probably date from this period; but they have not yet been generally accepted.

It is hard to understand Leonardo's persistent inactivity at this time. In 1479 he was employed by the government to paint upon the walls of the Palazzo Vecchio the hanging of Bernardo Bandini, one of the murderers of Giuliano de' Medici; but he advanced no farther than a summary sketch. This was a work whose prompt and vigorous execution would have secured the favor of Lorenzo the Magnificent and of all the Medici faction, while its neglect must have given great offense. It is therefore strange that the ambitious young man should again have failed to carry out his commission. It was not from repugnance to the subject; for, profound psychologist as he was, it was his custom to witness executions, with a view of noting the expressions of men standing face to face with the supreme mystery.

It was probably at this time, too, that he began the *St. Jerome* of the Vatican, advancing no further than the monochrome underpainting. His abandonment of this was no great misfortune, for it is perhaps the least pleasing of his compositions, and his talents were better employed elsewhere. It shows that even in youth Leonardo possessed

that rare skill in depicting the ravages of age that is apparent in so many of his drawings. Life in its decay always seems to have attracted him as much as in its full-tide splendor; and he studied as no one else has ever done the ruin that time wreaks upon the human lineaments.

II

AT THE COURT OF IL MORO

It is not surprising that Leonardo quitted Florence. His failure to execute the important commissions with which he had been entrusted must have cast discredit upon his abilities as an artist. The Florentine school of painting, with its hard outlines and crude colors, did not satisfy him; but it was so firmly established and was practised by such able masters that the task of overthrowing it was too great. In that revival of classic learning which was the supreme glory of Florence in his day, Leonardo took no interest. Greek he never knew, and he learned Latin only in middle life. Even the antique sculptures that were being so enthusiastically unearthed scarcely interested him at all. Nature was the only teacher whom he acknowledged. The democratic spirit of Florence, with its bourgeois conventions, was hateful to one who accepted no guide save truth, and who subjected all received opinions to a remorseless scrutiny. His illegitimate birth and his exclusion from his father's home in a land where it is the custom for all the generations of a family to live in patriarchal fashion under the same roof were also causes of embarrassment.

Other reasons perhaps there were; and when he was about thirty years of age Leonardo determined to quit his native city.

Amongst his voluminous writings are various reports

made by an engineer in the employ of the Sultan of Cairo, written from Armenia and the frontier fortresses in Asia. From these Dr. Richter and others have concluded that Leonardo went to the Orient and served the Egyptian Sultan, then called "the Sultan of Babylon," two years as an engineer; even that he became a Mahometan. This may be true; but if so, it is strange that Leonardo's contemporaries make no mention of it. It was Leonardo's practice to copy anything that interested him, and it is more likely that these reports were transcribed from the writings of some contemporary.

Yet there is nothing improbable in the story. In those days, when the wealth of the Indies still found its way to Europe through the portals of the East and the lands of the Orient were still full of intense vitality, they must have possessed great interest for one of Leonardo's inquiring mind. As for the passages in the reports indicating that the writer was a Mahometan, Leonardo's faith hung so lightly upon him that he would probably have had little difficulty in conforming to the religion of the country where he dwelt. He seems to have been a deist rather than a Christian. There is at least one passage in his writings where he speaks of Christ as a mere man, and not a few where he expresses his contempt for priests and monks; though he always speaks with lofty conviction of the goodness and majesty of God. When all is said, however, the verdict on his Egyptian journey must remain "not proven."

So far as we know, it was to Milan that he first went on quitting Florence. And this was natural. Milan presented the most perfect field in all the world for the exercise and development of his talents. Mistress of the fertile Lombard plain and of many subject cities, it was far larger and richer than Florence. Its native school of painters, while not destitute of merit, was too weak to interpose any obstacles to the principles that Leonardo advanced. It presented a great

contrast to Florence in every way. Instead of frowning structures of dark stone, looking rather like fortresses or dungeons than private dwellings, it was of brick. Even the churches were of the same material, as was the citadel-palace of the dukes, the vast Castello. Only in the midst of this wilderness of red baked earth the glorious cathedral arose, snow white in the splendor of its new marble, but still lacking its dome and its façade. And while the rich plains encircled Milan on every side, far away to the north the Alps rose in all their majesty, and at their feet were the glorious Italian lakes which Leonardo was to love so much, and which were to become his favorite haunt.

The government of the duchy was radically different from that of Florence. The Medici ruled their native city much like the political boss of to-day in America. The forms of the republic were preserved, and still possessed considerable vitality. The ruler had no defined position, but must consult public opinion. The public revenues were largely administered by the magistrates, and Lorenzo spent upon affairs of state the greater part of his private fortune.

In Milan the duke was absolute. The vast revenues of the duchy were his to spend or squander as he pleased. The long tyranny of the Visconti had practically destroyed the ancient spirit of freedom; and men bowed their necks submissive to the yoke. At the head of the state was Lodovico il Moro, youngest son of the great Francesco Sforza, ruling in the name of his feeble nephew, Gian Galeazzo. He was a splendid prince, highly educated, a lover of art and literature, a munificent patron of poets, artists and philosophers. He was an enigmatic and contradictory character. Ambitious beyond measure, he yet shrank from the shedding of blood in an age when every statesman recognized the right of making away with one's opponents. Extremely cunning, he yet uniformly over-reached himself in the end. Determined to usurp his nephew's throne, he

married that nephew to the daughter of Alphonso of Naples, the strongest potentate in Italy, and so prepared his own undoing. He was superstitious, and did nothing without the advice of his astrologers, of whom he retained a number about his person. His sad end casts a doubt upon the wisdom of the stars. Bold in his enterprises as long as the danger was at a distance, he showed himself a coward when the peril was at hand. Inviting the French into Italy, he turned against them as soon as they had driven his enemy from the throne of Naples, only to fly without striking a blow when they came to punish his treachery. He was fond of pageants and splendor; and on his cap blazed the famous diamond of Charles the Bold. He received his title of "Il Moro," "The Moor," on account of his dark complexion, and he seems to have been proud of it, adopting the mulberry tree, which in Italian is also called "Moro," as his coat of arms.

But at the time when Leonardo sought a home in Milan none of this weakness had been made manifest. Lodovico was the foremost potentate of northern Italy, rich, splendid, surrounded by a magnificent court where men of learning or genius found a ready welcome. It was his ambition to excel the Medici as a patron of the arts; but it must be admitted that the galaxy that he gathered about him shone far less brightly than that which reflects undying glory on the name of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Still, he attracted two men who are among the choice spirits of all the ages, Leonardo, the wizard of Art, and Bramante, the great architect.

We are told that Leonardo went to Milan as the messenger of Lorenzo, to bear to Lodovico a wonderful lute that he had fashioned in the shape of a horse's head, and on which he played with the greatest skill. Leonardo was recognized as the foremost improviser of his time; and as he stood before Lodovico in the perfection of his manly

beauty, with golden locks clustering about his shoulders, singing in a melodious voice songs of his own composing while he touched his splendid lute, he must have taken the court by storm. We know not whether it was then or at a later date that he presented to Lodovico the remarkable offer of his services which we find in the Codex Atlanticus, unhappily without a date. In this, after setting forth many wonderful things that he could do as a military and hydraulic engineer, he concludes:

"Furthermore, I can execute works in sculpture, marble, bronze or terra cotta. In painting also I can do what may be done as well as any other, be he who he may.

"I can likewise undertake the execution of the bronze horse, which is a monument that will be to the perpetual glory and immortal honor of my lord your father, of happy memory, and of the illustrious house of Sforza.

"And if any of the above-named things shall seem to many to be impossible and impracticable, I am perfectly ready to make trial of them in your Excellency's park, or in whatever other place you shall be pleased to command, commending myself to you with all possible humility."

In any other this would have been shameful boasting. In Leonardo, the portion at least that deals with the fine arts was only the truth. In this memorial he makes no mention of his musical gifts, which would lead one to infer that it was presented after Lodovico had heard him play and sing, and was in a position to judge those talents for himself.

Leonardo's services were engaged, and on the most flattering terms. We know not what his salary was at the beginning; but while he was painting the *Last Supper* it was two thousand ducats, the equivalent of twenty thousand dollars a year, an unexampled income for an artist in those days. He was not a courtier, like Bramante, and he was not housed in the Castello, but had his separate estab-

lishment, where he lived surrounded by his pupils, and where his stables were filled with the splendid horses that he loved — not the long-bodied English horses that have now become almost universal, but the compact animals of his day, so well suited for artistic treatment, and such as we see upon the Parthenon frieze. Here he was the revered master — here his genius developed, free from restraint, along its own lines.

It was in 1482, 1483, or 1484 that he established himself in Milan. Lodovico had not yet usurped the crown, he had not yet even made the fatal marriage of his nephew, who was weak alike in mind and body. Nor had he ever married; but was content with the charms of his favorite, Cecilia Gallerani, who was worthy of his love. Beautiful, sweet, gentle, highly educated and intelligent, without personal ambition, devoted only to her lover's interests, she was the center around whom the artists, poets and scholars gathered. One of Leonardo's first tasks was naturally to paint her portrait. This, which excited so much admiration at the time, has unhappily been lost.

The chief task for which Leonardo was brought to Milan was the making of the equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza that was to immortalize the founder of the house. It was to be the greatest work of the kind of modern times, twenty-six feet high, weighing a hundred tons; and that a young man who had never done any sculptural work of importance should have been entrusted with such a commission reveals the force of his personality. Leonardo set to work with enthusiasm. Always a student of the anatomy and movements of the horse, filling the background of his first large picture, the *Adoration of the Magi,* with horses admirably portrayed, he made innumerable studies of horses in every position, moving and at rest. These sketches, which are now scattered over the world, are not only the most beautiful and the most spirited, but the most accurate, of all

drawings of the noble animal that were ever executed. He changed his design many times, and it is impossible to say which was finally adopted. At first, he seems to have contemplated a horse walking quietly, like those in all equestrian statues that the world then contained; but finally he seems to have settled upon an animal rearing above the body of a crouching foe, whose upraised shield lent a support to the fore feet. Upon the animal rode Sforza, in his hand the baton of command. In these days, when the world is full of the statues of rearing horses, this design seems simple enough; but in Leonardo's day it was a novelty presenting unsolved problems.

At Windsor there are some drawings for the statue showing the horse walking quietly, and on them are notes for the castings; whence it has been inferred that such was his final design. In reality it proves nothing. Leonardo knew that he must cast the statue himself, and the problem confronted him in the beginning.

The statue was finished in plaster in 1493, and was exhibited under a triumphal arch on the occasion of the marriage of Lodovico's niece Bianca Maria Sforza to the Emperor Maximilian. But by that time the ducal finances were so depleted that there was no money to pay for its casting, and when, six years later, Lodovico was driven from his throne, the disintegration of the model began. The Gascon archers of the conqueror used it as a target for their cross-bows, and then it seems to have been left exposed to the weather till it perished. We hear of it in 1501, when Ercole d'Este tried to secure it for the adornment of Ferrara; but after that it is mentioned no more.

Later on, when Leonardo had returned to Florence, the bitter and churlish Michelangelo publicly taunted him with the failure to complete his statue. But the reproach was unjust. Leonardo consumed no more time in the making of the statue than St. Gaudens spent on the Sherman monu-

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ment, and it was far larger and more original. Then, too, he did all that a sculptor should be required to do, all that any modern sculptor does. The casting of the statue in bronze is not an artist's work, but the labor of a founder. Even this Leonardo might have done had not the low state of the ducal finances precluded the expense. He had made his arrangements to cast it in five parts; but neither the metal nor the money to pay his assistants was forthcoming.

The destruction of Leonardo's model is an irreparable loss to art. The surpassing excellence of the drawings that he made for it justify the belief that it was the noblest equestrian monument ever produced, and that had it come down to us, Leonardo would have been ranked not merely as the painter of the greatest of all pictures, but as the maker of the world's most noble statue.

The *Last Supper* is generally conceded to be the greatest picture ever painted. It is the first picture of modern times that possessed true grandeur of style, and it still remains unapproachable. It is the world's supreme masterpiece in composition. Christ and his disciples sit in a plainly furnished room at a long table, behind which there are three windows looking out upon an extended prospect softly lighted. In front of the central window is the figure of our Saviour, bathed in a gentle radiance that serves him as a halo. He has just spoken the words, "One of you shall betray me," and the effect of the appalling announcement is seen in the faces of all the disciples and in all their gestures. With unparalleled skill they are thrown into groups of three so naturally that it seems as if any other arrangement would be impossible. Their agitation is great and manifest; but behind it all there is an immense reserve force. Christ is left alone in the center, yet every movement, every emotion is centered in him. In the nobility of the faces of all save Judas, in his aspect of cruel and impenitent resolve, art has spoken its loftiest word. In the old pictures Judas had

been isolated on the other side of the table, with his back to the spectator, an improbable and inartistic arrangement. Leonardo puts him amongst the most favored disciples, between St. Peter and St. John; but he accomplishes the same result of separating him from the others by causing him to lean forward upon the table, facing his Master with implacable gaze as he clutches the money-bag and overturns the salt-cellar. Long did Leonardo work upon it; and at last, when in 1479, he desisted, he left the face of Christ unfinished, despairing of making for the Master a countenance grander than those of some of his disciples. At least, so says Vasari; though in the present state of the work we cannot discern that this head is less finished than the others. Most wonderful is the rhythmic grace of the composition. Three of the figures are standing, but they lean forward so gracefully that their heads scarcely rise above those of their seated companions, and they only accentuate the harmony of the lines.

This is one of the rare works that speak the final word upon their subject. When the *Last Supper* is spoken of, this picture inevitably arises before the mind's eye. It has made all previous presentations of the theme crude and primitive, all subsequent ones comparatively weak and ineffective.

Leonardo spent ten years upon the picture, and the good monks were sorely vexed by the delay. Once he had to silence the worthy prior, who had complained to the Duke, by a threat to use him for a model of the Judas. He made Lodovico understand that an artist is often best employed when using his mind, not his hand. But when the work was finished the monks were more than content, and it was universally recognized as the world's masterpiece.

In this, as in all his other works, Leonardo avoided the introduction of portraits into religious pictures, creating types instead of limning the features of his contemporaries, as did

other artists of the time. So, too, instead of the costume of the day, which usually appears in the works of his fellow artists, he gives us simple draperies that are appropriate to every age, and which hang in folds of a consummate grace and dignity not unworthy of Phidias himself.

His method of working is thus described by Bandello:

"He was wont," records this writer, "as I myself have often seen, to mount the scaffolding early in the morning, and work until the approach of night, and in the interest of painting he forgot both meat and drink. Then came two, three or even four days when he did not stir a hand, but spent an hour or two in contemplating his work, examining and criticizing his figures. I have seen him, too, at noon, when the sun stood in the sign of Leo, leave the Corte Vecchia (in the center of the town) where he was engaged on his equestrian statue, and go straight to Santa Maria delle Grazie, mount the scaffolding, seize a brush, add two or three touches to a single figure, and return forthwith."

Unhappily, Leonardo made a fatal mistake in the medium that he employed. Fresco was not suited to the delicate effects that he sought, and the necessity of painting in haste before the plaster dried was incompatible with his deliberate methods of work. So he painted in tempera upon the wall. It used to be universally believed that it was in oil; but the recent investigations of the Cavaliere Cavenaghi, who has restored the picture with such skill, prove that tempera was the medium employed. Had he painted on wood or canvas and then placed it in position, like the Venetians and the mural decorators of to-day, his masterpiece would no doubt still be untouched by time; but the dampness of the wall caused the paint to fade and scale, so that even in Vasari's days it was already a wreck. Since then it has been re-painted at least twice; in 1652 the legs of Christ were cut away to make a door, and during the French Revolution the refectory of Santa Maria delle Grazie, on whose end wall it

was painted, was used as a stable, and the French soldiers amused themselves by throwing stones at the heads of Christ and his disciples; so that the present condition of this work is deplorable. Still, faded and scarred as it is, it yet possesses a dignity, a lofty and harmonious beauty, an organic perfection surpassing any other work of mortal brush. Even in its ruined state there is in it a greatness and a charm which are not found in any of the innumerable copies that were made when the picture was still unspoiled.

In 1491, at the age of forty, Lodovico married the youthful Beatrice d'Este. Intelligent and ambitious, she infused into her husband's policy a boldness that it had lacked. If, as is generally believed, Gian Galeazzo, the rightful Duke, was poisoned by his orders, it was most likely at the suggestion of Beatrice, who probably had not those scruples against bloodshed that so distinguished her husband among the rulers of his age. Young and brilliant, fond of dress and of pomp and pageantry, Beatrice became the center of the life of the court. She compelled Lodovico reluctantly and after many struggles to put away Cecilia Gallerani and to marry her to one of his nobles. Leonardo painted Beatrice's portrait with that of her husband on the wall opposite the *Last Supper;* but scant traces of them remain. Beatrice died in 1497 while her husband was still at the height of his power, and was spared the misery of his ignominious fall.

Lodovico loved his fair young bride, but he could not remain long constant; and after a few months or years he took as his favorite Lucrezia Crivelli, of whom we know little save that she found favor in his eyes. The picture in the Louvre called *La Belle Féronnière* is supposed to be Leonardo's portrait of her; but fine as it is, it lacks the master's suavity, and there is much cause to doubt whether it is by his hand, and no especial reason to believe that it represents the fair Lucrezia.

But in the Ambrogian Library there is a portrait of a

young girl of an exquisite purity and a ravishing charm which the wisest believe to be Leonardo's work. Morelli, who had a singular predilection for Ambrogio de Predis, assigns this lovely gem to him, and his lead has been followed by many authorities; but it seems more reasonable to give this exquisite production to the one man who unquestionably could have painted it. While at Milan he probably painted also the *Madonna Litta* now in St. Petersburg, a picture whose authenticity is questioned, but whose beauty and suavity make it worthy of the master.

While Beatrice was duchess, the pageants in which the monarchs and people of the Renaissance delighted were more numerous than before, and much of the time of Leonardo and Bramante was spent in organizing these ephemeral displays. The brilliancy of the court was increased from time to time by visits from Beatrice's sister, Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua, the most brilliant woman in an era of brilliant women.

It was an age of pageants. At a time when the clothing worn was so bright and many hued that a gathering of the people in holiday attire was a pageant in itself, it was inevitable that men should love such display. Every festival, every great event, was celebrated by parades in which figured floats of fanciful designs and banners often painted by the greatest artists. For the arrangement of these festivities the talents of Leonardo and Bramante were in frequent requisition. We may believe that Leonardo's plans were the more interesting and original, Bramante's the more stately. It seems a pity that such lofty talents should have been expended on works that lasted only for a day.

It is fairly certain that the Sala delle Asse in the Castello was adorned by Leonardo. Its decorations have but recently been uncovered and restored. The walls are painted to represent a forest, the overarching branches covering the ceiling so that one seems to be in the midst of a

verdant grove. Other pictures he painted, too, while at Milan, of which Vasari and Lomazzo speak, but which have disappeared. Meantime he was also making great numbers of wonderful drawings that were not intended to form part of any picture. No artist ever sought to penetrate the secret of personality with such persistence. It was the human countenance that most concerned him. If he met a person whose face struck him as unusual, whether for beauty or ugliness or strangeness of expression, he would follow him for hours, striving to extract the secret of his individuality. He was a hunter of the soul, pursuing it in its most recondite hiding places, and trying to drag it to the light. He loved beauty, particularly when there was in it something of strangeness; but deformity had for him almost as great a fascination. All sorts of hideous beings fill his sketch books. Provided only that they were not commonplace, that they possessed some quality of grace or deformity that distinguished them from the vulgar herd, he deemed them worthy of his pencil. Every period of humanity, every aspect of the soul, is revealed to us in these wonderful drawings, the most exquisite that the hand of man ever made, the most subtle in their searching of the human heart. If nothing had survived of Leonardo's save his drawings, we should be compelled to recognize in him one of the master spirits of all times.

In all that Leonardo did he was an innovator. He was never content to follow the beaten track. Each picture was to him a problem to be solved as well as a thing of beauty to create; and he solved more artistic problems than any other man that ever lived, so many that he made the way of the modern artist easy.

Amongst his innovations was the practice of drawing his figures nude and afterwards clothing them, a practice which Raphael borrowed, and which most later artists have adopted. In this way he attained a vitality, a soundness

of structure unknown to his predecessors. It was to this system also that he owed his marvelous skill in the handling of draperies — a skill which only Phidias could surpass, and which no other artist of modern times has equaled.

But while he was revolutionizing art, so that all who preceded him were reduced to the condition of primitives, he was making those investigations into nature which show a penetration unique in history. He was the only man great alike in art and science, and in both he was so great that in neither department has he been excelled. His scientific discoveries are so numerous that it would require volumes to set them forth; and this is not the place for their exposition. Yet no view of Leonardo would be complete without some reference to them, and we may speak briefly of a few, to give the reader a faint idea of the breadth of his achievement.

Long before Bacon's birth he set forth the principles of inductive science; and the great Englishman adds scarcely a thought to Leonardo's contribution. When Copernicus was a boy and Galileo still unborn, Leonardo wrote, "Il sole non move," "The sun does not move," thus compelling the earth to revolve about it. Our position in the universe he understood, and wrote, "Even if a man were as large as our world, he would, in the universe, seem only like the very smallest star, which looks merely like a point." In those days, when sea shells found on the tops of mountains were accepted as conclusive evidence of the Flood, he showed that the slow crawling molluscs could not have reached the summits during the time that the Flood lasted, and that the mountains were once at the bottom of the ocean. Of the Flood itself he says that if the waters ascended above the mountains, they must have encircled the earth at the same height, and could not have subsided, for they would have had no place to go to. When all men accepted literally the story of the six days of creation, he estimated that it had

taken at least two hundred thousand years for the Po to do its visible work of erosion. He recognized the power of steam, and used it to throw balls and turn spits. He discovered the theory of complementary colors, and realized that white and black were not colors at all. He understood the laws of optics, and discovered the camera obscura. He laid down the profound principle, now universally accepted, that motion is the cause of all life. Long before Harvey was born, he understood the circulation of the blood and the function of the heart as a tireless pump. He understood that water is composed of countless molecules. He watched the rhythmic advance of the ocean's waves, and he comprehended that light and sound moved in the same way. He understood the law of gravitation, and knew that it is the force that draws objects towards the earth's center and holds the universe together. He looked at the faintly illuminated body of the new moon, and divined that it was the earth's reflection that lit it up. In the structure and growth of plants he made great discoveries. He knew that the tides obeyed the moon, and that the ocean rose highest at the equator. In an age when all men believed in the occult sciences, he demonstrated the folly of every system of divination.

In mechanics he equally excelled. He showed the advantages of conical bullets and of breech-loading guns. He devised guns composed of many barrels mechanically discharged. He made more mechanical inventions than any man that ever lived, some of them merely wonderful toys for the diversion of his contemporaries, others ingenious contrivances for scientific investigation, many of practical utility that continued in use until recent times; a few that are still in service, like the hoisting apparatus with which the obelisks of London and New York were reared into position, or the saws still employed in the quarries of Carrara. He also demonstrated the advantage of the screw

propellers with which our leviathans of the deep are now driven across the waves, and our aeroplanes and dirigibles hurled through space.

He gave much attention to aerial navigation, studying the flight of birds, and a passage in his writings of lyrical fervor shows that at one time he felt sure that he had found its secret. But gasoline had not then been discovered, nor the gasoline engine invented, and he failed for want of motive power. Were he living to-day he would be the wizard of the air. As it was, he invented the parachute.

We know that he did not construct all the canals and levees of the valley of the Po, as was once believed; but he was a great hydraulic engineer. He was also a great cartographer; and the maps that he made, which are in the nature of bird's-eye views of the regions depicted, are probably the most beautiful ever drawn, and surprisingly accurate. He was the greatest anatomist of his time. In 1516 he stated that he had dissected more than a hundred bodies of all ages and both sexes; and his anatomical drawings are declared by experts to be the most perfect ever made. In an age when dissection was esteemed a great crime and homicide a venial offense, Leonardo wrote on one of his anatomical drawings: "And thou, oh man, who through this work of mine learnest to understand the marvelous works of nature, if thou believest it to be a crime to dissect the human body, consider how infinitely more wicked it is to take the life of a man; and if his outer form appears wonderfully made, consider that it is as nothing compared with the soul that dwells in this body; for this, whatever it may be, is a thing of God. Let it therefore dwell in His work according to His will and good pleasure, and do not let your anger or your wickedness destroy a life; for, verily, he who does not value life does not deserve to possess it."

In his pictures there is no obtrusion of anatomical knowl-

edge. The groundwork of bone and muscle is always hidden beneath the flesh. Leonardo said that a picture should always look as if it had cost no effort to paint it; and in this he succeeded. How different from many of our painters of to-day, who wish every stroke of the brush to show! "The more an art involves of physical labor, the baser it is," he said; and so he placed painting above sculpture.

He was probably the first man to climb a very high mountain. He tells us that he ascended Monte Rosa, and observed the brightness of the light and the want of blueness in the sky due to the rarification of the atmosphere.

As we have remarked, had Leonardo published his discoveries it would have advanced the progress of science a hundred years. Why he buried them in his strange reversed writing we can only guess. Some of them the bigotry of the age would have visited with the fate of Galileo or Bruno. Then in those days when there were no laws of copyright or patent, and when men took freely what they found, he naturally feared that if he let his discoveries be known, he would be robbed of their glory. Probably he intended in some time of leisure to put his notes into shape and give them to the world; but the leisure never came; and so when he died all his discoveries were buried with him, and it has required the labor of hundreds to bring them again to light. One of the strangest things about him is that throughout his long life his handwriting underwent no change, so that it gives no clue to the date of his compositions.

Yet he was fond of teaching. At Milan he formed the "Academia Leonardo da Vinci," and here he gave to his followers instruction not only in the arts, but in the sciences. It seems probable that a large portion of his writings, including the "Treatise on Painting," the most instructive work ever written on the subject, were notes for his lectures. He was attached to his pupils, aiding them with both money

and advice, and we know how deeply he was beloved by at least two of them, Melzi and Salai. Here at Milan he formed the most gracious and lovely school of art that the world has seen. His followers naturally lacked his strength and his profundity of vision; but the grace and suavity of his style are reflected in their works; even in the case of men who, like Luini, Il Sodoma and Correggio, were never his immediate disciples. He was not a lettered man, and he dispised the artifices of style. But he was one of the world's great describers. His descriptions of storms at sea and on land and of the aspect of a battle in the "Treatise on Painting," are the most penetrating in observation, and among the most eloquent that were ever penned.

Of Leonardo's poetry no trace remains. The commonplace sonnet once attributed to him is now known to be from another hand. It is not recorded that he ever committed to paper any of the improvisations that delighted his contemporaries.

Not later than 1495 Leonardo took into his household as pupil and body-servant a young Milanese named Salai or Salaino, remarkable for the beauty of his person and his long golden hair. He served Leonardo faithfully on the whole, and the master became deeply attached to him. On one occasion, as we read in Leonardo's journals, he bought for Salai a magnificent cloak; and shortly afterwards we read the sad entry, "Salai has stolen 4 soldi." But still Leonardo did not withdraw his confidence, and Salai remained in his service until the master's departure for France, a period of at least twenty years. In Italy there has never existed the gulf between master and man that exists in lands where the feudal system has had full sway, and the relations between Leonardo and Salai were rather those of companion and friend than of master and servant as we understand the term.

It was Salai's beautiful hair that first won Leonardo's

favor, and this reminds us of the fascination which hair seemed always to possess for the master. No artist ever loved hair so much or painted it with such skill, now twined about the head in cunning braids, now flowing loose in silken splendor. He took infinite pains in its presentation, drawing each particular hair with more than a Dutchman's love of detail, yet without sacrifice of the general effect. He was the first in art to realize the potency of those gleaming locks that have ensnared the hearts of men so often; and his skill in rendering their charm remains unrivaled. It has been strangely observed that a love of beautiful hair betrays a sensual mind; but Leonardo was the least sensual of men.

In his later days at Milan his stipend was irregularly paid owing to the financial embarrassments of the Duke, and Leonardo was often in straits to maintain his large establishment. Still, he was able to save money, as is shown by the fact that before his return to Florence he deposited 600 florins, the equivalent of six thousand dollars, at the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. Moreover, the Duke gave him a valuable vineyard outside the city gates early in 1499. Above all, he was free in his northern home to develop his genius along its own lines. Without Milan we should not have had Leonardo in the plenitude of his power, as without Weimar Goethe could not have been the Goethe that we know.

III

LATER DAYS

In 1499 Louis XII of France prepared to attack Milan to avenge the treachery of its Duke on the occasion of the expedition of Charles VIII to Naples. At the news of the coming invasion Lodovico was seized with terror. He sought allies on every hand, but none cared to incur the

enmity of the most powerful nation in Europe. He who had called the French into Italy, and so sealed his country's doom, now even begged the unspeakable Turk to send an army to his assistance. It was all in vain. Then he sent his children and a treasure of 250,000 ducats, equal to two millions and a half of our money, into Germany, and on the approach of the French he fled in panic on September 21, 1499, leaving the Castello with 150,000 ducats in charge of Bernardino da Corte, with instructions to hold it till he could return with reënforcements. But upon the entry of the French into the city the treacherous Bernardino yielded up the Castello without a blow, in consideration of a large reward.

Of Lodovico's brief restoration during the following spring, of his shameful betrayal into the hands of the French by his Swiss mercenaries, of his eight years' imprisonment in France and of his wretched end in the horrible underground dungeon of the castle of Loches, we need not speak; for with his flight to Germany he passes out of Leonardo's life forever.

The possession of such large treasures as his flight revealed makes us wonder why he was so remiss in paying the sums due the master. No doubt the cloud hovering in the west admonished him to hoard his wealth for purposes of war.

Upon Lodovico's fate Leonardo makes in his records this short but tragic entry: "The Duke lost state, possessions and liberty, and no undertaking was completed by him."

Leonardo remained in Milan; but in December, 1499, as we have seen, he sent the greater part of his money, 600 ducats, to Florence, where it was deposited at the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. He witnessed the triumphant entry of Louis XII on October 6, 1499, when the French monarch came attended by Cæsar Borgia and many other lords. Louis was not without taste in the fine arts, and he

was so impressed by the *Last Supper* that he wished to detach it from the wall and transport it across the Alps. Fortunately he found no engineer rash enough for such an undertaking. No doubt the artist was presented to him, but we have no record of their meeting.

The labors of pacifying and annexing a large principality allowed little time for the encouragement of the arts, but Louis must have given Leonardo some commission, since we find him a year and a half later speaking of his engagement with the king. Still, in its unsettled condition Milan was not a pleasant abode for an artist. Amid the clash of arms the arts were silent. So Leonardo departed late in the year 1499, with Salai, and stopped for a time at Mantua, where he made a beautiful cartoon of Isabella d'Este, generally believed to be the one that adorns the Louvre. Vainly she strove to attach him to her court, to succeed Mantegna, whose powerful brush was dropping from his aged hand. It must have been hard to resist her entreaties, for she was the loveliest woman of her time, a devoted wife, a tender and sagacious mother, mistress of all polite learning, and possessed of a charm of manner and a brilliancy of intellect that made her the center of every gathering. But a provincial town offered few attractions to Leonardo, and he passed on to Venice, then at the height of her glory. We know that he was in Venice on the 13th of March, 1500; but his stay there was brief, and shortly afterward we find him back in Florence.

The Florence to which Leonardo returned was sadly different from the Florence that he had left more than fifteen years before. Lorenzo the Magnificent was dead, and the brilliant galaxy of poets and scholars that were gathered about him had died or been dispersed. Wars and civil tumults and the spirit of religious frenzy aroused by the preaching of Savonarola had resulted in general bankruptcy. Ver-

rocchio and most of the other great artists whom Leonardo had known had passed away. Botticelli was still alive, but he had been spoiled by Savonarola, and instead of the gracious and lovely pictures of his earlier days, he was painting gloomy entombments, for which he had no talent. Baccio della Porta had renounced the brush, and shut himself up in a monastery as Fra Bartolommeo. Piero di Cosimo had given up the quaint pagan conceits which had constituted his charm, and was trying to win salvation by making poor religious pictures. Lorenzo di Credi and Filippino Lippi were still painting; but they had gained nothing in power. Ridolfo Ghirlandajo was a lad of seventeen, destined to learn much from Leonardo. Raphael had not yet come. On the other hand, Perugino was in his prime, and spent much time in Florence. He was then the most popular painter in Italy, and a great favorite with his patrons; for when they ordered a picture of him and paid his price, they were sure to get it, though it might be painted from his designs by one of his numerous assistants. Though but twenty-five years of age, the real head of the Florentine School was Michelangelo, who had already given proof of his transcendent genius.

Amongst these men Leonardo came to cast his lot. He had left Florence a young man of great promise and slight achievement; he came back the foremost artist in the world. His *Last Supper* had borne his fame through Italy and beyond the Alps. On his return to his native city he was warmly greeted by all members of his profession save Michelangelo.

It was but natural that the mind of Michelangelo, intense, powerful, deeply religious, but comparatively narrow, should feel aversion for this man, who regarded all things with philosophic doubt, and accepted nothing that had not been proved. And with his directness of artistic

vision, which saw in the marble the statue praying to be liberated, it was inevitable that Michelangelo should consider as a trifler and a dilettante one who made a hundred studies for every picture, and who in his desire to do something more perfect than was possible to mortal brush rarely brought anything to completion. Certain it is that without apparent provocation he hated his illustrious rival.

It was no doubt shortly after Leonardo's arrival in Florence that the famous encounter between him and Michelangelo took place. Some gentlemen were standing on the street discussing a passage in Dante, and Leonardo approaching, they asked him to expound it. Just then Michelangelo passed, hurrying to his work; and knowing him to be a great student of Dante, Leonardo courteously suggested that Messer Michelangelo would be able to explain it to them; whereupon the younger man, thinking that Leonardo intended to mock him, exclaimed: "Thou who madest a model of a horse to cast it in bronze, and finding thyself unable to do so, wert forced with shame to give up the attempt, explain it thyself, if thou canst." Leonardo turned red, but made no reply.

It is easy to picture the scene to the mind's eye; the narrow Florentine streets where men must pass close to one another; the frowning palaces of dark stone on either side; the grave burghers in earnest converse; Leonardo coming up in all his manly beauty, the golden locks now tinged with gray falling about his shoulders, clad in splendid garments and with the manners of a prince, always at leisure to converse with worthy men; the young Michelangelo hurrying past, powerfully built but rather short and without grace, his naturally homely features rendered still more so by his broken nose, roughly clad in woolen garments, his mind full of his work and of the terrible prophecies of Savonarola, with no time to talk to anyone; the courteous invitation, the churlish rebuff, and the mortification of the mas-

ter, accustomed to being treated with respect, even by the great of the earth.

On his return to Florence Leonardo at first gave himself up to mathematics and to hydraulic engineering, planning the canalization of the Arno from Florence to its mouth. He also proposed to raise the Baptistry, which is now below the level of the street, and set it upon a becoming foundation. This suggestion was considered chimerical, though his persuasive powers were such that while they listened men believed. Many larger buildings have since been lifted; and no doubt Leonardo would have been able to make good his boast had he been permitted. In the meantime Isabella d'Este was vainly supplicating him for a picture.

Leonardo's life at Florence was extremely simple. Accustomed for years to live like a prince, he now contented himself with living as a simple Florentine artist. Each day he gave Salai the money to buy their modest provisions, and as he was doing little to secure an income, he saw his funds running daily lower.

Shortly after establishing himself again in his native city, Leonardo heard of a commission that had been given by the Servite Monks to Filippino Lippi to paint an altarpiece for their church of the Annunziata. Probably in the impoverished condition of Florence commissions were hard to get. At any rate, Leonardo expressed a desire to do this work; and Filippino, who seems to have been one of the most amiable of men, resigned in his favor. In order to hasten it, the Servites took Leonardo and all his following into their monastery. He procrastinated as usual, however, and it was not until the following spring that he had the cartoon ready. When it was exhibited it was a thing of such marvelous beauty that all Florence thronged to see it as to a festa, and the good monks thought that they were going to get a masterpiece indeed. But the work proceeded no further; and after three years of waiting, they gave up

hope, and again employed Filippino, who was prevented by death from painting the picture, so that finally Perugino made for them the *Crucifixion,* now in the Academy at Florence.

For some inexplicable reason most writers have assumed that this cartoon is the one now at London in Burlington House. Yet Vasari expressly states that it contained a lamb, and there is no lamb in that cartoon. The recently discovered letter of Pietro da Nuvolaria to Isabella d'Este of April 3, 1501, describing the picture as Vasari does, but with more precision, shows that it was either the *St. Anne* of the Louvre, or more probably the lost cartoon from which that masterpiece was painted.

There is something unbecoming in one grown woman's sitting in the lap of another, though the motive was not unknown in medieval and Renaissance art; and at the first glance the eye is offended by this Virgin who sits on her mother's knees. But when this feeling has passed away, the ineffable sweetness and beauty of the composition enthrall us, and the more we study it the more we share the enthusiasm that it aroused in the breasts of the good people of Florence. It was bought by Francis the First in 1516, but strayed back into Italy, where Cardinal Richelieu acquired it at the time of the siege of Casale in 1616.

We next hear of Leonardo in September, 1501, as the military engineer of Cæsar Borgia. As such he traveled most actively, inspecting all of Cæsar's important fortresses. Much ridicule has been made of Cæsar for employing an elderly painter in such a capacity; but the Borgia was eminently practical, absolutely without illusions or respect for virtues, and the fact that on August 18, 1502, after a year's service, he gave Leonardo a commission most sweeping in its terms, bidding the commanders of all his garrisons to show everything to him, and to place everything at his service, proves that the master must have displayed in mat-

ters of war the transcendent talents that he manifested in so many other fields of activity.

Leonardo has often been reproached for entering the service of the wickedest man of modern times. In those days, however, artists, scholars and engineers did not presume to scan the morals of princes; and many of the greatest monsters of the Renaissance lived surrounded by the choicest spirits of their time. Sigismondo Malatesta was almost as bad as Cæsar Borgia; yet Leo Battista Alberti, Leonardo's worthy predecessor, was his honored guest. It is to be doubted whether any artist, scholar or engineer in Italy would have refused an offer of employment from Cæsar Borgia because of his crimes.

It has often been suggested that Leonardo made for Cæsar the beautiful maps of Tuscany that have come down to us. This is incredible. Leonardo was a good man, honorable and just in all his dealings; and it is not to be believed that he would have made maps of his native land for the demon of cruelty and guile, who, as he must have known, longed to add the territories of Florence to his rapidly increasing dominions. It is more likely that these maps were made before he entered Cæsar's service or after he left it, as a part of his geographic and hydraulic studies.

On July 23, 1503, we find Leonardo before Pisa, lending his advice to the Florentines in the conduct of the siege. Perhaps he had already left the service of the Borgia at that time. If so, there is no record of his discharge. It is more likely that, urged by his city, worn out by a siege which had been vainly pressed for years, he had obtained a furlough, to give the Signory the benefit of his advice. However valuable his counsel may have been, it was not conclusive, for the siege dragged its slow length along until 1509.

On August 18, 1503, Cæsar's father, Pope Alexander VI, died of the poison that he had prepared for one of his wealthy cardinals, as is generally believed, and Cæsar him-

self lay low of the same malady. Then the whole world revolted against the monster; the dominion which he had built up with so much blood and crime crumbled to pieces as he lay helpless upon his sick-bed, and Leonardo was free again. He went back to Florence, had himself inscribed in its guild of painters, and entered upon what was to be one of the most fruitful periods of his artistic career.

Here he took up his abode with the Sculptor Francesco Rustici, who was then engaged on his statue of *St. John the Baptist preaching between the Pharisee and the Levite,* which now adorns the Baptistry. Vasari says that Leonardo assisted him, and no doubt he did, at least with advice; for the work is so far in advance of Rustici's other productions as to suggest the influence of a higher artistic personality.

The great hall of council in the Palazzo Vecchio had been reconstructed, and Piero Soderini, the Gonfalonier of Justice and head of the government, conceived the idea of having it adorned by the hands of Leonardo and Michelangelo. The younger man chose for his subject the Florentine soldiers surprised while bathing in the Arno during the Pisan war, while Leonardo chose the Battle of Anghiari, in which the famous condottiere Picinnino was overthrown by the Florentines.

Both artists made cartoons which were the world's wonder and the art school of their contemporaries, and both cartoons have perished. Of Leonardo's we have only a copy of the central portion; the fight for the standard to which the picture owes its popular name.

Leonardo has described war as "a most bestial frenzy," and none has represented it with such intensity. The fury of the human beast ravening for his fellow's blood has never been depicted with such frightful power. Those few men on horseback struggling for the possession of the flag reveal in their countenances every possibility of rage and hate.

Even the horses are inspired with an equal ferocity, tearing one another with their teeth.

Unhappily, about this time Leonardo read in Pliny of the method of encaustic painting practised by the ancients, and resolved to adopt it. He painted this episode of the standard upon the walls according to his understanding of Pliny, and tried to harden it by fire. The lower part hardened, but the upper portion, which was beyond the reach of the heat, ran, and Leonardo abandoned the work in disgust. Whether it perished by inherent defects or was destroyed by the returning Medici to make way for pictures glorifying their house, we do not know. The last heard of it was on April 13, 1513, when the council ordered the erection of a balustrade to protect it.

This was the first successful battle-piece of modern times, with no trace of the aimless confusion of Paolo Uccelli, nor of Piero della Francesca's coldness. Indeed, had it been completed, it is probable that it would have stood as high above all other battle-pieces as the *Last Supper* stands above all other representations of that scene.

By the terms of his contract the work was to be completed by February, 1505, and Leonardo was to receive in the meantime 15 florins, equal to one hundred and fifty dollars, per month. There was also in the contract a provision that if the picture was not finished by that time, Leonardo should return all the money, and give up the cartoon. Evidently, Soderini knew his man, his disposition to procrastinate and finally to lose interest in his artistic undertakings.

On January 25, 1504, Leonardo was one of the commission, composed of all the leading artists of Florence, to locate the *David* of Michelangelo. Considering the treatment that he had received at the hands of the sculptor, he might have been excused if he had selected an undesirable location; but, with his usual generosity, he voted for the most

honorable and best of all, under the central arch of the Loggia dei Lanzi, then called the Loggia of Orcagna, where it would be seen of all men and yet protected from the weather.

Meanwhile Leonardo lost his father, a fact which he notes in the laconic words, "Wednesday, July 9, 1504, at seven o'clock, died Ser Piero da Vinci." Unfeeling as this entry must appear, it does not indicate any want of affection; for Leonardo, the most kind-hearted of men, never, as we have seen, expresses his feelings in any of his manuscripts.

At some unknown date he also lost his mother. Entries show visits to the hospital to see "Catarina," and expenditures for "Catarina's" funeral. Strange as the designation is, there is little doubt that it is to the worthy peasant woman who bore him that he refers. We are glad to know that he was with her in her last hours, and gave her suitable burial. It is a pity that his excessive reticence has afforded us no clue to his feelings in these solemn moments.

His father made no provision for Leonardo; and his brothers and sisters excluded him from the inheritance on account of his illegitimate birth. Shortly afterward his uncle Francesco died, leaving him by will a small estate; and at once the brothers and sisters started a suit to deprive him of its benefits. The law's delays were then as much of a vexation as in Hamlet's time. This unjust lawsuit dragged on from year to year, and was to Leonardo a source of infinite vexation. We hear of it as late as 1511. When it was settled and how we do not know.

In 1505 Leonardo was working upon what was destined to be the greatest portrait ever painted by mortal brush, the *Mona Lisa*.* As the *Last Supper* was the first picture in the grand style, and still remains the grandest, so the *Mona Lisa* was the first portrait which sought to penetrate beneath

* Stolen from the Louvre, Aug. 21, 1911, and not yet recovered as we go to press.

the outward lineaments and to reveal the soul within, and it is still the subtlest and the most profound of all. As Leonardo said of his predecessors in the art of portraiture, they are like mirrors, reflecting everything and understanding nothing. With him the features were but the means of revealing the spirit's life.

Most portraits merely give us the outward semblance. They may delight us, they may interest us; but the *Mona Lisa* enthralls us. She has all the mystery, all the unsounded depths of a real woman of rarest charm. Her inscrutable smile compels us to linger; and the longer we gaze upon her the more inscrutable it becomes. It is a smile that is only on the lips, while in the eyes there are unsounded depths. Vainly we question her; like the Sphinx her riddle eludes us still.

When we consider her origin we are let into something of her secret. The wife of Francesco del Giocondo, one of the foremost citizens of Florence, she was not a good bourgeois matron reared in the honest but narrow traditions of her husband's home. She was a Neapolitan of the proud family of the Gherardini, brought up in the passionate South, on those shores where the sirens dwelt, and which even in Roman days Propertius called "litora, quae fuerant castis inimica puellis." As a Neapolitan aristocrat she had been reared in a society which knew no moral restraint, where passions were volcanic, where men dreamed of impossible loves, and where hate was a maddening frenzy. Nothing justifies a belief that she was other than a faithful wife; but as she looked on her honest bourgeois surroundings, so different from the atmosphere in which she had spent her youth, it is not strange that a smile of subtlest irony should play about her lips, that we should see reflected in her eyes dreams of another and intenser life. Of what she is thinking we do not know; but we know that an impassable gulf divides her from the worthy burgesses of

Florence, such as the placid, bovine wife of Angelo Doni, whom Raphael has painted in obvious imitation of the *Mona Lisa.* The best description of her that was ever penned is that of Walter Pater, a passage so beautiful that it cannot be too often quoted:

"The presence that thus rose so strangely beside the waters, is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years man had come to desire. Hers is the head upon which all 'the ends of the world are come,' and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek Goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty into which the soul with all its maladies has passed? All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and molded there, in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the reverie of the middle age with its spiritual ambitions and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants; and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary; and all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has molded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands."

Vasari says:

"Leonardo adopted this artifice:—Madonna Lisa was very beautiful; and while Leonardo was painting her portrait, he kept constantly near her musicians, singers and jesters, who might make her laugh, and so dispel the melancholy which is so easily imparted to painted portraits. In Leonardo's picture, therefore, there is a smile so sweet that while looking at it,

one thinks it rather divine than human work; and so it has ever been deemed a wonderful work since it is to all appearances alive."

It may be so, but the expression upon Mona Lisa's face is not one that would be evoked by such means upon the countenance of an ordinary woman. It speaks of a soul subtle and refined beyond measure, perhaps ironical, perhaps wandering in strange lands of exquisite sins and forbidden dreams.

At intervals during four years did Leonardo work upon it, and then, though it was finished with a detailed perfection never equaled, he esteemed it incomplete. Francis I bought it at a price equivalent to forty thousand dollars, a sum such as had not been paid for any picture since Roman days. The lamp-black which Leonardo used too freely in the underpainting to enrich the chiaroscuro has darkened it overmuch. It has been injured by injudicious restoration. As it has come down to us it is but the shadow of the picture described by Vasari; but even as it is to-day, it is immeasurably the greatest of all the portraits in the world. The haunting charm of the countenance, the grace of the pose and the exquisite and incomparable beauty of the hands — fair patrician hands that have never been disfigured by toil — lead those most indifferent to art to linger long over this picture and to return to it again and again.

At the same time Leonardo painted a portrait of Ginevra Benci, which was greatly admired, but which has now been lost.

It must have been at Florence that Leonardo began his picture of *Leda,* for we have a sketch of it from Raphael's hand; but it was most likely finished at Milan, possibly in France. It has long since perished, but several copies enable us to say that it was a supremely beautiful work, pure as a Grecian statue, with an added charm that Leonardo

alone could bestow. Leda stands beside the erect form of the great swan, her left arm about its neck. Its right wing passes behind her, and its outer edge follows the exquisite curves of her right thigh. In the grace of its lines and the purity of its sentiment it reminds one of *La Source* by Ingres; but, of course, it was far more perfect. It probably perished at the hands of some fanatic, to whose jaundiced eye beauty was a thing impure.

Louis XII in some way became possessed of two small pictures by Leonardo. In 1502 the master excuses himself from painting a picture for Isabella d'Este on the ground of his previous engagements with the French king, which he hopes to discharge within a month. The nature of these engagements we do not know.

The duchy of Milan was ruled by Charles d'Amboise as governor for Louis XII. D'Amboise was a young man of great intelligence and unusual cultivation. He invited Leonardo to come to Milan, and on May 30, 1506, the Florentine government gave the artist leave of absence for thirty days under a penalty of 150 ducats, fifteen hundred dollars, if he did not return at the end of that period to resume his work upon his picture in the great hall.

At Milan Leonardo completely won the heart of the governor, who conceived for him an unbounded admiration. He procured for Leonardo an extension of his leave of absence, and when he finally concluded to let him go in December, he gave him a letter to the Signory of warmest eulogy. But in the meantime his commendation of the master to his King bore its fruits, and before Leonardo could leave, the urgent demands of Louis XII prevented his departure. First Pandolfini, the Florentine ambassador at the French court, wrote to express the earnest desire of the French King that Leonardo should not quit his service; and then the King himself wrote, urging the same request. Forced to yield to pressure from so powerful a sovereign,

the Signory reluctantly abandoned all hope of seeing the completion of the great battle-piece, and released the artist from his engagements. In the meantime, however, Soderini had written him a letter of bitter reproach, and Leonardo, with the aid of his friends, had got together all the money that he had received, and tendered it back; but Soderini generously refused to accept it. So Leonardo was still in Milan when Louis XII made his entry on May 24, 1507, and used the talents for arranging gorgeous pageants that he had developed under Lodovico to do honor to the successor of that unhappy prince.

From this time until 1513 he lived chiefly at Milan, in high favor with the regent, with the title of painter, architect and engineer to the King, and engaged, as far as we can learn, chiefly on works of hydraulic engineering for the protection of the land and the encouragement of navigation. His artistic activity during this period was apparently slight; but it was most likely at this time that he painted his *Bacchus*. Whether this is the picture now in the Louvre we cannot say.

The weight of authority is against the view that that work is from the hand of Leonardo, and the flesh tints and background are not those customary in his pictures. Still, for one who was always experimenting this is no sure test, and its history would point to its being his creation. It is a work of supreme beauty — perhaps the most perfect embodiment of the beauty of youthful manhood that modern times have produced. Its affinity with the *St. John* is apparent; though it is more regular and conventional in type.

Again and again Leonardo was called back to Florence by his wretched lawsuit, which must have cost him more than the value of the trifling devise; but never again was his home to be beside the Arno.

It was while in Milan at this time that Francesco Melzi

entered Leonardo's studio. He was then but a boy, and, like Salai, he was remarkable for his beauty and his long golden hair. But, unlike Salai, he was of patrician family and large wealth, and he came as a disciple, not as a servant. Between the noble youth and Leonardo there grew up a devoted friendship, and they seem never to have been parted save by the master's death. Leonardo spent much time as an honored guest in the Melzi Villa at Vaprio, and in all of Leonardo's wanderings Melzi was at his side, watching for his comfort with tender solicitude. Few sons have been more beloved by their fathers, or have deserved it more.

In 1511 Leonardo lost by death his generous patron, Charles d'Amboise, and on Easter day, 1512, the French champion, the youthful hero Gaston de Foix, the spoiled child of Victory, was slain at the battle of Ravenna. The French were expelled from Milan, and for a short time Maximilian, oldest son of Lodovico, sat upon his father's throne. Leonardo still lingered in the city, probably not in favor with the new duke, who must have resented his services to France; for when Leo X was elected Pope on March 11, 1513, the master contemplated seeking his fortune at the papal court. Accordingly, on September 14, he set out for Rome, accompanied by Melzi and Salai and three other disciples.

At Florence he attached himself to Giuliano de' Medici, the pope's youngest brother, who conceived for him the greatest admiration, and granted him a monthly pension of 33 ducats, the equivalent of three hundred and thirty dollars, then considered a munificent salary for an artist or a man of science. It was apparently in the latter capacity that Giuliano most esteemed him, for he delighted in Leonardo's conversation, and exacted of him no artistic labors that we know.

Rome was then the center of the world's culture. Leo

was a munificent patron of the arts and of literature, gathering about him scholars and artists from every quarter. Papal Rome was never so delightful a place of sojourn as in those happy days when the keys of St. Peter's were in his lenient hand. Raphael, one of Leonardo's most devoted admirers, was Leo's favorite artist. Michelangelo, Leonardo's old enemy, had fallen from the high favor which he had enjoyed under Julius II; and while he still remained in Rome, he was powerless for harm. Bramante, Giuliano da San Gallo, Il Sodoma and other artists were also at the papal court, forming such a galaxy of genius as has rarely been assembled. The Pope received Leonardo with the greatest favor, and gave him apartments in the recently erected Belvedere, the choicest part of the Vatican and a shrine of art. Leonardo spent much time with Leo, who delighted in his conversation.

Under such favorable conditions one would expect great things of the master; but his stay in Rome is the most unsatisfactory part of his career. He seems to have done nothing in art except to paint for officers of the papal court two little pictures that have disappeared. Leo ordered a picture of him, but when he found that Leonardo had begun by distilling oils for the varnish, he gave up hope, exclaiming, "This man, who thinks of the end before he has made a beginning, will surely never do anything"; and so it proved. The *Madonna of St. Onofrio,* formerly supposed to have been painted at this time, is certainly by another hand.

Meantime, Leonardo was amusing himself and his friends with mere trifles. He took a strange lizard that a vine-dresser brought him, attached to it wings that he made to oscillate by quicksilver, put upon it horns, a beard and false eyes, and kept it in a cage to astonish visitors. So, he took the entrails of a sheep, and blew them up with bellows till they filled the whole room, driving his friends into corners;

and this he called a fit emblem for genius; why, is not apparent. But the most disheartening feature of his Roman sojourn is his letters written to Giuliano de' Medici about two Germans, a locksmith and a mirror-maker, who were in Giuliano's employ. The letters are incoherent complaints of trivial occurrences, and are filled with accusations of their trying to learn his secrets which sound like the production of a querulous old woman. We know that a few years afterwards Leonardo's right arm was paralyzed, though we know not when the blow fell. These letters sound as if he might then have been suffering with the nervous disorder that later manifested itself in paralysis. It must be borne in mind, however, that Leonardo's fashion of writing from right to left indicates that he always had a morbid fear lest his secrets should become known to others.

We do not know when Leonardo quitted Rome. His departure was induced by loss of papal favor due to his dissecting dead bodies, a practice then forbidden by the church. We find him back in Milan on December 9, 1514, where Lodovico's son was still upon the throne. What led him thither at that time does not appear. We know, however, that he never again turned his face southward, and that Florence saw him no more. On September 13 and 14, 1515, Francis the First, the brilliant young king of France, won his great victory at Marignano, and Milan again fell under French dominion. He made his triumphal entry on October 16, and Leonardo was there to receive him. At Pavia Leonardo delighted the monarch and his court by making a lion that walked toward the throne, and whose breast opened when he stopped, showing that it was filled with the lilies of France.

When in December, 1515, Francis returned to France, he persuaded Leonardo to go with him; and in the depth of winter the aged master crossed the Alps, leaving behind him

the sunny land of Italy, which he was never to see again. He was attended by his devoted disciple, Melzi, still merely a youth of twenty-two, and by a faithful servant, Batista de Vilanis; but Salai remained behind in Leonardo's vineyard.

Francis delighted greatly in the conversation of Leonardo. In later years he told Benvenuto Cellini that no man knew so much. He established the master in the manor house of Cloux between the castle of Amboise, which was his own favorite abode, and the town of that name. It was a commodious dwelling composed of eight large rooms. It is still standing, tastefully restored and called Clos-Lucé. Leonardo received an annual pension of 700 gold crowns, equal to seven thousand dollars, a large income for those days. Antonio di Beatis of Amalfi gives us an interesting picture of Leonardo as he then appeared. He writes:

"We visited Messer Leonardo Vinci of Florence, a graybeard of more than seventy years, the most eminent painter of our time, who showed to his Eminence the Cardinal three pictures. One represents a Florentine lady, painted from life, for the late Lord Juliano de' Medici; the second is a youthful John the Baptist; and the third, a Madonna with the Child sitting on the lap of Saint Anna; all of the highest perfection. One cannot indeed expect anything more of special merit from his brush, as his right hand is crippled by paralysis. But he has a pupil, a Milanese, who works very well: and although Messer Leonardo can no longer paint with the beauty that was peculiar to him, he can still draw and instruct others."

At this time, when he seemed to his visitor to be over seventy, Leonardo was in fact but sixty-four. The only authentic likeness that we have of him, the drawing in red chalk at Turin, tells the same story. Leonardo was prematurely old. This is very strange. The wonderful strength of his youth promised a long life. His way of living was wholesome and abstemious. His constant study of

nature, his ownership of fine horses, his frequent excursions to the Alps and long sojourns in the region of the Italian Lakes, his numerous journeys, assure us that he spent a large part of his time in the open air, and did not lack for exercise. He was a hard worker, but the busy knitters of the brain are usually rewarded for their labors by length of days. The thing that most frequently ages men is worry; but his calm and philosophic mind was apparently above that. Certainly his writings show no traces of worry save complaints of delay in payment of moneys due. Though he was not always paid promptly, his pecuniary condition was far more advantageous than is customary with artists. He never felt the pinch of want, and usually his circumstances were prosperous. His premature old age is therefore inexplicable.

His portrait, too, is equally surprising. It is the face of a man soured and embittered, who gazes upon the world with keen, searching eyes that have read the hearts of men, and found them wanting. He who had looked into the deepest mysteries of the human soul, to whom Nature had opened her bosom without reserve, bears upon his countenance an expression of contempt not free from irritation. If we did not know that the face is Leonardo's and drawn by his own hand, we should reject it as an impossible presentment of the serene and mighty sage.

Nothing in his writings after he left Rome bears out the message which his likeness conveys. As his handwriting underwent no change, we cannot, as has been stated, tell which of his papers were written in youth and which in age, save for an occasional date or reference to passing events; but they all, except his querulous complaints to Giuliano de' Medici, show a calm and philosophic spirit. We know that the kindness of his disposition remained unaltered to the end. In his will he not only made generous provision for his faithful servants, but he left all his Florentine property,

including the 400 florins, equal to four thousand dollars, that he had on deposit at Santa Maria Nuova, to his brothers and sisters, whose injustice and greed had embittered his declining years. We read of nothing on his part save wisdom and loving kindness. Whence then came the bitterness that is written in his face?

Strange to say, the last of Leonardo's works, the *St. John the Baptist,* is that which most strongly breathes the spirit of youth. It reminds one of Marlowe's "Hero and Leander," of Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis." If we did not know better, we should be sure that it was the work of a very young man in the first flush of passion and in the full tide of buoyant life. Despite its Christian title, the cross and the upward pointing finger, it is the most profoundly pagan picture that was ever painted; so pagan that few can look upon it without a certain sense of disquietude. It is no saint, but a naked faun emerging from the sedgy brake with a smile upon his lovely lips. In the luscious softness of his flesh he is the brother of those androgynous beings in which the later art of Greece and Rome delighted, where the sculptor strove to unite all the charms of man and woman in a single body. But Leonardo goes far deeper. He shows us a soul that is neither masculine nor feminine, but strangely both. In its style of painting it anticipates Rembrandt by a hundred and fifty years. This form emerges from a background of luminous shadows that envelop and caress it, just as do Rembrandt's portraits. We know that Rembrandt never saw it, but wrought out his style with no help from the Italian Wizard.

Leonardo seems to have spent his time while in France mostly in works of hydraulic engineering, introducing the system of canal-locks then in use in Italy, but unknown beyond the Alps. Up to his final sickness he was still busy in noting down his scientific observations. As a teacher of

art he came too soon. There were no French artists capable of benefiting by his instruction.

Here in his manor house of Cloux he passed away on the 2nd of May, 1519. Before his death he received the last sacraments, and died in communion with the Church, with which, indeed, he had never had any dispute. In his will, prepared a week before his death, he commends his soul "to Our Lord God and Saviour, the Glorious Virgin Mary, to St. Michael and to all the blessed Angels and Saints in Paradise." This may have been a meaningless formula inserted by the worthy notary, who drew the will, Maître Bureau, whose descendants continued to carry on his office until 1885. He provides that his body shall be interred in the church of St. Florentin at Amboise. Perhaps the name reminded him of his home by the Arno. He made generous provision for Salai, Batista de Vilanis and his maidservant, Mathurine; to his beloved Melzi he left his books and manuscripts, his portraits, the implements of his craft, and the arrears of his pension. He left moneys for masses for his soul's repose, perhaps in sincere belief, perhaps as a politic concession to the all-powerful church. More probably, however, Leonardo in his declining years returned to the faith of his childhood, like so many aged men when brought face to face with the supreme mystery.

Vasari tells an affecting story of how Leonardo died in the arms of Francis I, and this was universally believed until recent years. We now know, however, that it is proved by the court records that on the day of Leonardo's death the King was at St. Germain-en-Laye near Paris. Moreover, in the noble letter which Melzi wrote to the unworthy brothers of his beloved master, telling them of the circumstances of his death and of the provision that he had made for them, there is no mention of the King. Had such an honor been conferred upon the man he loved so much, Melzi would not have failed to mention it with pride.

Leonardo's tomb was destroyed, and the place of his burial forgotten. In 1808 the church of St. Florentin was razed to the ground after being repeatedly desecrated. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Arsène Houssaye, guided by the terms of Leonardo's will, dug on the site of the church to find his grave. He discovered some fragments of stone on which were the letters, "Leo — inc — dus — Vinc." Beside them was a skeleton; and this he piously laid to rest in the chapel of Amboise Castle. Unhappily the record of Leonardo's interment shows that he was buried in the cloister, not in the church; so that the tomb over which we are now called to mourn can scarcely be that of the supreme genius whom Michelet calls "the Faust of the Renaissance."

A word in conclusion about the authenticity of Leonardo's works. Some years ago, when the destructive school of criticism was in possession of the field, it looked as if Leonardo would be reduced to a myth. Morelli began the assault by assigning to Ambrogio de Predis many of the loveliest creations that had been attributed to Leonardo's brush. He did not realize how strange it was that there should be another man of Leonardo's time who could draw and paint with all his charm and skill, how much stranger still that a master so consummate should have remained in obscurity. Now the pendulum is swinging the other way, and experts are attributing to Leonardo works that perhaps he never saw. The disposition, however, is to assign to him new things that were never before mentioned in connection with his name rather than to give him back the works that tradition attributes to his brush. Under the circumstances it seems safer to leave to the Master the pictures that men have believed to be by his hand unless the inferiority or diversity of their workmanship clearly reveals an humbler origin.

RAPHAEL

1483–1520

I

UMBRIA AND FLORENCE

RAPHAEL, who was born to effect the great reconciliation, to wed classic perfection of form to Christian purity of soul, and so to create our modern standard of beauty, was throughout life the favored child of fortune. Singularly capable of learning from others, a bee that sipped the richest honey from every flower he passed, he met at each stage of his career the influence needed for his development. Born with the face of an angel and with a charm of manner that won every heart, he went smiling through life, and all rejoiced to assist him on the upward path. In that blessed age of the Renaissance genius never failed of recognition, was never suffered to perish in poverty and neglect, as so often in other periods; but of all the artists of the time none was so fortunate as Raphael.

When one looks at his beautiful face, perhaps the most delicate and refined that has come down to us, one thinks that surely this must be the last exquisite flower of an ancient line. His family was, however, of humble origin. We can trace it back only to 1446, thirty-seven years before Raphael's birth. Then a peasant named Peruzzolo Santi, the great-grandfather of the painter, dwelt in a little rude hamlet called Colbordolo, clinging to a bare mountain side on the eastern slopes of the Apennines, under the shelter of a fortress, traces of which yet appear. Peruzzolo was a merchant in a small way, trading in the scant produce of that

rocky soil. He was sufficiently prosperous to own his own home, no doubt humble enough. In that year Sigismondo Malatesta, who would have been entitled to the name of the Fiend of the Renaissance if Cæsar Borgia had not come along to rob him of it, swept over the mountains in one of his forays, and burned most of the wretched huts. That of Peruzzolo was left standing, but the desolation of the country and the fear of a repetition of the raid disgusted him with his mountain home, and in 1450 he removed to Urbino and became a merchant. Here the family prospered. In 1464 Raphael's grandfather bought a double house in the Contrada del Monte, now called the Contrada Raffaello, a steep, ill-paved, crooked street leading upward from the market-place. This house still exists; a double house three stories in height, of the plainest character, an undistinguished part of a solid block of similar houses. It passed to Raphael's father, and here Raphael was born. It has now been set apart as a memorial of the great master, and is kept with pious care.

The date of Raphael's birth is uncertain. In the epitaph that Bembo placed upon his tomb it is stated that he died on his thirty-seventh birthday. If so, he was born on April 6, 1483. Vasari, however, says that he was born on Good Friday. If so, it was March 28. Bembo, his intimate friend, who had no doubt sat with him at many a birthday feast, is more likely to be right. At any rate, his father conceived great hopes of his future, for he gave the child the name of one of the archangels. Perhaps already he had the face of an angel.

Urbino was not then the neglected provincial town of some five thousand inhabitants that it is to-day. The city belonged to the counts of Montefeltro. Federigo of Montefeltro had in 1474 married his daughter to Giovanni della Rovere, nephew to Pope Sixtus IV, and had thus been made Duke of Urbino. He was a remarkable man. A

great soldier, he won power and wealth as a leader of mercenaries, whom he hired out to fight the battles of the neighboring princes, after the evil fashion of the day. He was not a brutal condottiere, like many of his opponents, but an accomplished gentleman, skilled alike in the arts of peace and war, so that the noblest youth of Italy sought service under his banner. At Urbino he held his court in the stately palace that he built, and here he gathered round him scholars, poets and artists, with whom, in his leisure hours, he delighted to converse. He was one of the first to appreciate the beauty of oil painting, which had just been discovered in Flanders; and he imported Justus of Ghent to introduce the new art into his dominions. Piero della Francesca painted him and his good wife Battista, and we may still see their honest plain faces in the Uffizi at Florence, standing out against wonderful landscapes that anticipate the work of the modern *plein-airistes*. He was so beloved by his people that wherever he went they gathered in crowds, invoking blessings on his head and praying for him length of days.

The good Duke died in 1482, the year before Raphael's birth; but he was succeeded by his son Guidobaldo, a man of less force and energy, but perhaps as enlightened as his father. He had in 1489 taken for his wife Elizabetta Gonzaga, of Mantua, one of the loveliest women of the Renaissance, in whom the varied culture of the time was combined with spotless virtue and great kindness. Guidobaldo, who was made commander of the papal forces by Julius II in consideration of his naming as his successor Francesco Maria della Rovere, the nephew both of Julius and himself, was absent a great part of the time, and when at home he was compelled by failing health to live much in seclusion. In the meantime his Duchess held the court, assembling around her the brightest spirits of the age, so that Urbino

became the seat of every gentle art, the school where the perfect gentleman and lady were to be formed. The charms of social intercourse there have perhaps never been surpassed. Fortunately Baldassare Castiglione has preserved the picture of it for all time in his book, the "Cortegiano," which still remains the mirror of the perfect gentleman. The author tells us that the Palace of Urbino was then the most splendid in Italy, and the most richly adorned with books, statues and pictures.

Among the artists that rejoiced in Federigo's favor was Giovanni Santi, the father of Raphael. How he became an artist and under whom he studied we do not know. But for his immortal son he would be remembered only by a few specialists. His talents were not sufficiently great to give him a place of honor in so rich an age. Still, he was a worthy painter, who did good work. His pictures are executed with care and patience. Their coloring is good. They have in them the purity and sweetness of Umbria. Moreover, Giovanni was a poet. He wrote a long poem on the exploits of Duke Federigo in the difficult *terza rima* that makes the translation of Dante so impossible. It is not a great poem. It lacks inspiration; but it shows the scholarly tastes of its author. Probably Raphael could not have had a better father. He was a good craftsman, and in his home the child grew up in the contemplation of lovely things and in the artistic atmosphere so essential to the development of genius.

Of Raphael's mother we only know that her name was Magia Ciarla. She had two children before Raphael, but they died in childhood. When Raphael came, his mother nursed him herself, not sending him out to be nursed in the family of a peasant, as was the universal custom of the time. In the family home at Urbino is a fading fresco of a Madonna and Child by Giovanni, which tradition says is

a portrait of Magia and the infant Raphael. It has more individuality than most of Giovanni's work, and looks as if it might be a true likeness.

The year 1491 was a sad one for Giovanni. On October 3rd he lost his mother. On the 7th his good wife passed away, and his only daughter followed her in a few days. But he was not a man to live alone. Seven months after Magia's death he married Bernardina Parte, the daughter of a goldsmith of the town. She brought him a dowry of 200 ducats, but perhaps little happiness, for her disposition seems to have been difficult.

Giovanni died on August 1, 1494, leaving an estate valued at 860 florins, then a substantial fortune, and a will in which he provided for his wife and daughters, and bequeathed the bulk of his fortune to be divided between his brother, Don Bartolommeo, a priest, and Raphael. He named Don Bartolommeo as executor and as Raphael's guardian. The choice was not a happy one. Don Bartolommeo proved to be an avaricious knave. He would not give the widow, who had borne a daughter after Giovanni's death, a florin of her allowance. She on her part would not remain in her husband's house, but returned to her mother's home. Litigation ensued, but Don Bartolommeo fought the matter through the courts, so that it was not until 1499 that Bernardina received the first installment of her dower. There is nothing to indicate any affection between Raphael and his stepmother; but the letters which Raphael afterwards wrote to his maternal uncle, Simone di Battista Ciarla, prove that a warm attachment existed between them, and that Simone probably took the orphan into his own home, and became to him a second father.

What became of Raphael during the ten years that followed Giovanni's death we do not know. Vasari tells us that Giovanni took him from the arms of his weeping mother, and put him under Perugino as the foremost painter

of the time. But as the mother died when Raphael was but eight, this cannot be true. Moreover, from 1493 to 1499 Perugino was almost constantly absent from Perugia, working in different cities, and in his wandering life he could not have accepted the custody of a child of tender years. Besides, the will of Giovanni Santi, made two days before his death, proves that Raphael was then in Urbino.

Two divergent views are held with equal pertinacity by critics of equal authority. According to Crowe and Cavalcaselle and many others, Raphael went to Perugia in the fall of 1495, a year after his father's death, and received all his early training in Perugino's workshop. They see in the numerous pictures painted before 1504 only Perugino's influence. If so, the boy saw terrible sights. In Perugia there were two great houses ever struggling for the mastery, the Baglioni and the Oddi. Their contests were marked by a ferocity that was horrifying even in that remorseless age. Finally the Baglioni got the upper hand, and the Oddi were expelled. On the 4th of September of that year they made their last desperate attempt to recover their position. They burst into the city; but the Baglioni were aroused in time, and a frightful massacre of the Oddi and their partisans ensued. Perugia's narrow streets ran red with blood. The Baglioni reigned in peace, with Guido at their head. They were a lot of fierce beasts of prey, remarkable for their courage and their personal beauty, and he ruled them because he was the strongest. Around him were five sons worthy of such a father, Astorre, Morgante, Gismondo, Marc Antonio and Gentile. He shared the authority with his brother Ridolfo and with Troilo, Giovan-Paulo and Simonetto, the sons of the latter. But he had a nephew, Grifone, who aspired to the sovereignty. Grifone gathered around him a band as reckless and as lawless as himself, and on the night of Astorre's marriage, profiting by the freedom of access that his near relationship afforded, he

slew Guido and most of his family in their beds. Astorre, who was a Hector in strength and beauty, was slain while his bride strove to shield him with her beautiful body. The corpses were stripped and exposed in the market-place, where Astorre lay, in the words of Matarazzo, "as an old Roman in his blood" and Simonetto "scornful and proud in death as in life." But Grifone's triumph was short lived. His wife and mother fled to a country-house, and though, overwhelmed with remorse, he implored their pardon, they refused to see him. Meanwhile Giovan-Paulo, who had escaped in the darkness, fled to Città di Castello, and returning with 800 men, and forcing the gate of the Due Porte, he entered the city. As, clad in steel, he rode upon his galloping war-horse, he looked, Matarazzo tells us, like an avenging St. George. Grifone was cut down, and all the members of his conspiracy were slain, so that again the streets of the city ran with blood. Then Grifone's wife and mother entered the town, and finding him bleeding from many wounds, his mother, the noble Atalanta, begged him to forgive his enemies. He breathed the words of pardon, pressed her hand, and passed away. His death was to be the occasion of one of Raphael's masterpieces.

Morelli and his partisans on the other hand contend that Raphael remained in Urbino until the year 1500, and that his first master was Timoteo Viti, a pupil of Francia's. They see in Raphael's early pictures no trace of Perugino's influence, and deem them a clear reflection of Timoteo's style. If they are correct, Raphael was in Urbino in 1497 when the murderous hordes of Cæsar Borgia seized the city, driving the good Duke and Duchess into exile, and ruling it in Cæsar's remorseless fashion. In any event, the boy, so full of love for all beautiful things, must often have climbed up the steep street in which was his father's home to the hill where stands the old fortress, and felt his soul expand into the infinite as his eye wandered over the far-

reaching prospect from the blue Adriatic in the distant east to the grand mountains that towered, bare and majestic in their desolate grandeur, to the west. Here he breathed in that love for spacious distances that Perugia was yet to strengthen.

All that we really know of those early days is that Raphael was in Urbino in 1499, when he joined in a settlement between his stepmother and Don Bartolommeo, and that he was absent in 1500 when the settlement of that year was made. If, as seems probable, he remained in Urbino until then, it would have been natural to place him with Viti, the best artist then in the little city.

There are at Città di Castello two pictures by Raphael, the *Creation of Eve* and the *Crucifixion,* which are believed to have been painted in 1499, when he was sixteen years of age; but their condition is so deplorable that little can be said of them. On the other hand, the *Vision of a Knight* in the National Gallery, believed to have been painted in 1500, when Raphael was seventeen, is as perfect as on the day when it left his easel, a wonderful picture for a boy. Everyone knows the form of the sleeping knight to whom a beautiful maiden offers a flower as she invites him to follow with her the primrose path of dalliance, while on the other side a maiden not less fair but of severer aspect offers him a sword and book, bidding him pursue the hard road that leads to knowledge and power. The figures have already the poetic grace of Umbria, while the spacious background that stretches away to the distant mountains is full of charm. It is doubtful whether any other picture of equal merit was ever produced by one so young.

About the same time Raphael is supposed to have painted the *St. Michael smiting the Dragon* in the Louvre, and the exquisite *St. George* in the same gallery. All of these pictures are very small and finished with minutest care — gems of Umbrian grace; and in all the landscape is delight-

ful, full of that suggestion of the infinite that comes to the dullest heart when one gazes from an Umbrian hill-top over the echanted panorama unrolled before one's eyes. It must be noted, however, that M. Müntz, one of the greatest authorities on the subject, believes that these little gems were not painted until 1504.

Raphael began early that series of Madonnas that in popular estimation are his greatest works, pictures in which woman's beauty and the charms of motherhood have received their supreme apotheosis. Of course, his early essays in this field have not the perfection of the *Madonna della Sedia* nor the superhuman glory of the *Madonna di San Sisto;* but it is marvelous how a youth who had never known a father's joys and who had known a mother's love only in childhood grasped at once the essence of the sweetest, the closest and the tenderest of human ties. Even in the *Conestabile Madonna* at St. Petersburg, painted probably when he was but eighteen, there is a sweetness and a beauty and, above all, a comprehension of a mother's love, that few artists attain in their fullest maturity.

Once his true path was found, Raphael moved rapidly upon it. There followed speedily the *Madonna with St. Jerome and St. Francis,* the *Diatolevi Madonna* and the *Solly Madonna,* at Berlin, none of them perfect, but all remarkable for a youth under twenty to have painted.

In these pictures many can see no trace of Perugino; but it is certain that at one time Raphael was a pupil of the Perugian master and that for a while he dwelt in that city. Those who favor the Timoteo Viti theory admit that Raphael came to Perugia probably in 1499 or 1500, when Perugino was painting the Cambio. Nor is it reasonable to doubt that Raphael had a hand in that exquisite work, where the heroes and sages of antiquity stand with the dainty grace and pensive melancholy of Umbria and with no suggestion of the serene power of the ancient world. In

many of the faces there is a charming oval wholly different from the broad, round contours of Perugino, and which speaks of Raphael's influence. It may seem strange that Raphael should have had so important a part in Perugino's masterpieces, if he was a youth just arrived in the studio; but his manners were so winning and his talents so great that it is not surprising that Perugino, like everyone else, should have let him have his way.

If Raphael came to Perugia in 1499 or 1500, he found the two greatest of Umbrian masters working together as partners, Perugino receiving two-thirds of the profits, and Pinturicchio, a younger and less distinguished man, the other third. They were the two masters whom he needed at the time. Had he gone straight to Florence he would never have passed through that period of Umbrian sweetness and mystic love that forms one of his most exquisite qualities.

Perugino had fewer ideas than any capable painter that we know. He was so poor in invention that when he had painted a satisfactory figure he would transfer it unaltered to successive pictures. The great movement of the Renaissance — the rediscovery of antiquity — interested him not at all. He spent his time among artists and scholars fired with enthusiasm for "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome"; but they left him cold. His soul dwelt in the Middle Ages, and cared nothing for the new light. But he was a great artist. He excelled all his colleagues in the expression of simple devotion. He never crowded his compositions. His color is good, his handling of the brush, when good at all, is exquisite. He was a strong, practical man, who made his art pay and who accumulated a large fortune.

Pinturicchio, "the little painter," owed his name to his small size and his nervous excitability. He was also called Sordicchio for his deafness. As an artist he was far in-

ferior to Perugino; but he had conspicuous merits. He was, perhaps, the most picturesque of all painters. His works have great charm. His slender forms possess a dainty grace. While Perugino put upon the canvas only a few figures that seem unconscious of each other's presence, Pinturicchio displayed considerable skill in the handling of crowds.

Both masters taught Raphael to excel in landscape; for they were the greatest painters of landscape until Raphael took from them the palm in this as in all else. Perugino painted the landscape as seen from Perugia's lofty battlements, with a low horizon line stretching out into infinite distance. Pinturicchio painted it as it appears to the dweller in the valley, with the horizon line high, and yet with a good sense of space.

In Perugino's studio Raphael found a number of pupils, some destined to eternal fame, others to oblivion. The atmosphere was strangely different from that which prevailed among the art students of Florence. There life was like it is in the Latin Quarter in Paris to-day, turbulent, vivacious, mischievous, full of practical jokes and with scant respect for the proprieties. Here all was quiet, the young men painting their Madonnas and saints with simple faith undisturbed by the inquiries of the day. In the absence of female models they would pose for one another in women's parts. We have drawings of Raphael's in which he has used his fellow pupils as models for his female characters. They are gentle, graceful youths of truly saintly aspect. It was a good atmosphere in which to bring him up.

The greatest influence upon Raphael was, perhaps, the city of Perugia and its surroundings. Perched upon its mountain-top seventeen hundred feet above the sea, its battlements command what is perhaps the most entrancing prospect in all the world. Mountains are about it, but they

do not cut off the view. Through far-reaching valleys the eye is lured on from point to point until it is lost in the depths of the infinite; while the winding stream of the Tiber and the high-perched cities crowning every height with their graceful campaniles lend to the landscape an endless variety. Many a time the young man must have stood upon these battlements looking out with enraptured soul upon the limitless expanse, drinking in that sense of the infinite so often suggested in his works.

Within the city walls what strange contrasts did he find! Every stone in those narrow streets overshadowed by forbidding palaces had been dyed with blood. The citizens were ever ready to murder each other in some senseless feud; and yet they were filled with religious aspirations of a mystic intensity. Those grim burghers, who stood prepared to cut one another's throats or purses, had the greatest devotional painter of all the ages adorn their meeting place with one of his loveliest Madonnas, and all the churches were filled with pictures of the most exquisite sweetness. When we read of their deeds we think of murderous bandits; when we look at their art, they seem the gentle followers of St. Francis, brimming over with love for God and man.

The Baglioni presented a sad contrast to the enlightened princes of Urbino. They cared nothing for art, nothing for literature. Their only ambition was to maintain their ill-gotten power and to circumvent their enemies. Poets and scholars avoided their palaces, and it was not the princes, but the religious congregations and the honest merchants, who gave encouragement to the arts.

Perugino's house in the Via Deliziosa still stands. Here Raphael worked, and it is here that he probably lived; for it was the custom of the time for the pupil to dwell beneath his master's roof. The home was made attractive

by the beautiful young wife of the elderly master, Clara Fancelli, daughter of a distinguished architect of Mantua. She brought to her husband a dowry of five hundred gold ducats, which must have been very welcome, for he loved money overmuch. She was truly an old man's darling, for he loved her madly. It is believed that we see her features in the Madonna of his *Pavia Altarpiece.*

Shortly after Raphael came to Perugia he painted his first large picture, the *Crucifixion* that belonged to the late Lugwig Mond, and which he has left to the National Gallery. It is a beautiful picture, with all the spaciousness and serenity of Perugino, the adoring saints comforted by the certainty of the Resurrection, the cross standing in a pleasing landscape. It might easily be taken for a work of Raphael's master did we not know that it comes from the pupil's hand. With this work, painted before he was twenty, Raphael bade adieu to the great central event of Christian history. To his bright spirit, full of love for the beautiful and joy in the sweetness of life, such painful subjects were distasteful; and so soon as he became master of himself he turned to more cheerful themes.

It was about this time, when in his twentieth year, that Raphael painted the *St. Sebastian* at Bergamo. The beautiful young face is pensive with the thought of approaching death; but there are none of the horrors so often seen in pictures of the saint. Only the arrow held daintily in his hand suggests the coming martyrdom.

In 1503 Raphael painted the *Coronation of the Virgin,* the large picture that hangs in the Vatican. It was painted for Maddalena degli Oddi, who, on account of her sex, had been allowed to remain in Perugia when all her male kinsmen were expelled. He started it as an *Assumption,* and the Disciples stand around the Virgin's empty tomb, from which the lilies grow; but for some unknown reason, after that part of the work was finished, he changed it to a *Cor-*

onation; and the Virgin sits quietly in heaven while Christ puts the diadem upon her head. This, too, might be mistaken for a work of Perugino's; though there is in it something of greater refinement than that master knew.

But in the *Marriage of the Virgin* at Milan, painted for the Church of San Francesco at Città di Castello when he was twenty-one, the genius of Raphael shines out in individual splendor. Formerly it was universally thought that the *Marriage* at Caen was by Perugino, and that Raphael had merely improved upon his master's design. Now Mr. Berenson has convinced perhaps a majority of critics that it is only a free copy of Raphael's picture by the hand of Lo Spagna. If so, Raphael's originality is the greater. But in no event is his glory diminished. In every respect his picture is a masterpiece. In the delightful perspective, in the charming architecture of the temple, in the grace of the figures, in its sweet humanity, we realize that a new force has come into the world. He himself was justly proud of this, the most wonderful picture ever painted by a youth of twenty-one, and over the entrance to the temple he has inscribed the words, "Raphael Urbinas M D IIII." In this picture he reveals that preference for woman and her beauty that was to abide with him through life. Contrary to all precedent he puts the Virgin and her attendant maidens on the right hand of the officiating high-priest.

The picture was painted to celebrate a strange occurrence. A priest had stolen from the Sienese their most precious possession, the wedding ring of the Virgin Mary, and had brought it to Perugia. A war had ensued, but, safe upon her mountain-top, Perugia had kept the ring. How she could have hoped for the Virgin's blessing upon her theft we cannot in these days comprehend; but the Perugians were very happy in their ill-gotten relic, and wished to celebrate its importance.

In 1503 and 1504 Pinturicchio decorated the Library of the Cathedral of Siena, one of the most beautiful of rooms, full of the delicate charm and grace of the Umbrian school. Vasari says that Raphael aided him in making the designs, and it is highly probable that he did. Raphael had worked with him at Perugia; Pinturicchio knew the wonderful powers of the youth; and when engaged upon his great masterpiece, in whose execution he required numerous assistants, it would have been strange if he had forgotten the one who could give him the most efficient aid. Raphael's drawing of the antique group of the *Three Graces* that still adorns the Library is convincing proof that he was at Siena.

If, as seems most probable, the *Apollo and Marsyas* of the Louvre was painted by Raphael, it must have been before leaving Perugia and while the spell of Umbria was strong upon him. It seems impossible to name another who could have produced a work so exquisite and so full of charm, a thing that once seen haunts the memory forever. It is a little picture, but how full of poetry in the graceful forms and the still more gracious landscape!

When Raphael made his first trip to Florence we do not know. Probably it was in 1505, after he had done his work for Pinturicchio at Siena. Again he arrived upon the scene at the proper moment. He had learned all that Umbria could teach him. He had absorbed all its spiritual fervor, all its grace, all its ineffable charm, all its sense of the infinity of space. Already, though but a youth of twenty-one, he was a greater artist than Perugino and Pinturicchio. If he was to advance upon his radiant path, new worlds must be opened for him to conquer.

Florence he found seething with new ideas. Many artists were there, some, like Botticelli, devoted to the old tradi-

tions. But into their midst two giants had stridden, Leonardo, who had taken art out of its position as the humble handmaid of religion and was making it the expression of the universal soul of humanity, and Michelangelo with his titanic power. They stood pitted against one another, enemies since Michelangelo's wanton insult upon the streets of Florence, making the cartoons for their rival pictures, the *Battle of Anghiari* and the *Battle of Pisa*. Leonardo's was incomparable in psychological interest, in its revelation of the heart of man when ravening for his brother's blood; Michelangelo's was equally supreme as a study of masculine anatomy in every variety of movement. The two cartoons when exhibited in the spring of 1506 became the world's school of art. They marked a new departure, and made the work of all men who had preceded the contending giants primitive and archaic. The whole body of artists was in a ferment of excitement, some taking the part of Leonardo, others partisans of Michelangelo, still others clinging to the traditions of the past and looking with scant favor on the revolutionists. Here in Florence, where rivalries were so intense, minds in such a ferment, where pagan antiquity and modern science were all laid under contribution in the service of art, the young man found himself in a new world strangely at variance with the mysticism of Umbria and its rustic grace.

A weaker man would have been carried away and have become a follower of one of the giants. Raphael was like a beautiful tree, which absorbs from every soil the elements essential to its growth, and rejects the rest. When he reached Florence he was ready for the lesson that Leonardo had to teach. He was not yet ready for Michelangelo's. His genius had much more affinity with that of the elder man. Both had the same love for beauty, though in Raphael's conception there was not that element of strange-

ness that is so haunting in Leonardo's. Like a Greek, he sought beauty in its ideal perfection; but like Leonardo, he preferred the beauty of woman to the strength of man, the human to the superhuman.

No doubt Raphael and Leonardo met; but there is no record of their meeting. The great master, in the full plenitude of his fame, engaged in important works of art and engineering and absorbed in scientific investigations, could have had little time to give to an unknown youth from the mountains. But his pictures and drawings were there to speak for him; and from them Raphael learned the lesson that Leonardo had to teach. Yet he did not become an imitator of the great master, like so many of the Lombard painters. It is the glory of Raphael that he learned from all and imitated none. His was the most assimilative nature in the history of art. He took from others only so much as he could make his own, only so much as would become a part of his organic being. The process was one of growth and development. When he came to Florence he did not throw away what he had learned in Umbria. At first his manner is scarcely altered. But gradually as he learns more and more, the breadth and science of the Florentines make themselves increasingly apparent in his work.

With Michelangelo, who was not greatly his senior, he might have been more intimate. A natural repulsion, however, held the two apart. The great Florentine, homely of visage, rough in manner, solitary in his habits, probably had no kindly feeling toward the beautiful youth who had all those charms and graces that he lacked. Raphael, on the other hand, the most loyal of men, felt no attraction for the man who had publicly insulted his beloved master Perugino, calling his gracious masterpieces that still delight our eyes "absurd and antiquated." Perugino, enraged at the affront, had gone to law; and while the suit was still un-

determined his affectionate pupil could not fraternize with his adversary.

Raphael never became established in Florence. He spent there the greater part of his time until sometime in 1508; but he received no commission from any religious body or from the government. The city, under the leadership of Piero Soderini, gonfalonier of justice, was enjoying its last breath of freedom before it sank under the Medicean tyranny, to rise no more until it became a part of United Italy. Raphael always seemed younger than he was, and perhaps the youthful aspect of the beardless boy prevented Soderini from entrusting him with any important work. Nor did any of the leading men of Florence, such as the Strozzi or the Ruccellai, take him up. His warmest friend was the cultivated Taddeo Taddei, in whose home in the Via San Gallo he lodged for a time. This unpretentious dwelling bears the proud inscription, "Raphael of Urbino was the guest of Taddeo Taddei in this house in 1505." It is strange, too, that though Raphael produced many of his greatest masterpieces while in Florence — pictures of a ravishing beauty such as the city had never known — he is not mentioned by any of the writers of the time, who are always hailing each budding talent as a new Apelles. The blindness of the Florentines, a people singularly alive to new impressions, remains inexplicable.

But if Florence was slow to appreciate him, Umbria did not forget Raphael, and there he had important commissions. For the nuns of St. Anthony of Padua at Perugia he painted the great picture of the Madonna and Saints, known as the *Madonna di Sant' Antonio,* which Mr. Morgan has recently acquired for $500,000, then the highest price ever given for a picture. It is believed that it was ordered before Raphael went to Florence, and painted during his frequent visits to Perugia. It is far from being such a masterpiece as those that he was afterwards to

paint; but already there is something in it beyond what Perugino could do, a refinement of features, an aspect of intelligence such as no Umbrian had been able to depict. The face of St. Peter is particularly fine.

Here at Perugia, too, was painted the great altarpiece known as the *Madonna degli Ansidei,* which the British nation acquired from the Duke of Marlborough at a cost of £70,000. It is a marvelous work for so young a man, and the face of St. Nicholas of Bari, so refined, so ascetic and yet so kindly, is worthy of the greatest master. It was painted for the Church of San Fiorenzo at Perugia, and bears the date of 1506 upon the Virgin's mantle.

In the Church of San Severo there he painted his first fresco, the *Trinity* with four angels and six saints on clouds. It is a beautiful work, the faces refined and spiritual to the last degree, the attitudes of extreme grace. He left in 1507, and did not paint the saints on earth below; but the good monks knew that no other hand was worthy to touch such a masterpiece, and they waited patiently for Raphael to return and finish the picture that he had so wonderfully commenced. Only when he had passed away did they give up hope, and send for Perugino. The inferiority of his work is painful when thus brought into immediate comparison with that of his illustrious pupil.

We know that on December 29, 1505, Raphael was in Perugia; for on that day he appeared at the convent of Monte Luce, and received thirty ducats as a first payment on a picture of the *Coronation of the Virgin* which he never found time to paint. In the entry in the convent register this youth of twenty-two is described as "the best painter known to the citizens of Perugia"; and this in the city that had given a name to Perugino.

The last work that Raphael was to do for Perugia was the *Entombment,* now in the Borghese at Rome. It was ordered by the noble Atalanta Baglioni as a peace offering

for the troubled soul of her erring son, Griffone. The commission seems to have been given in 1503, but the picture was not finished until 1507, when it was hung in the church of San Francesco. It presented new problems with which Raphael had never grappled. His previous pictures had been simple and serene. Now he had to present active motion and intense suffering. Instead of the few persons whom he had been accustomed to place upon the stage, largely independent of one another, in the manner of Perugino, he was to represent a number of persons in concerted action. It is not surprising that before attempting so great a task he made many drawings. These are scattered all over Europe. Yet the result of so much labor was not wholly satisfactory. Raphael was never at his best in scenes of suffering, and in this picture, beautiful as it is, there is something academic, a note that does not ring true. It does not fulfill completely the hopes that are aroused by the exquisite studies that he made in preparation. Vasari thought it perfect, and no doubt all his contemporaries were of the same opinion. Now it is the fashion to criticize it too severely. The beautiful landscape, with the bare crosses standing gaunt upon the distant hill, is sufficient to make it a notable work, while the body of Christ, studied apparently from that of Michelangelo's *Pietà,* is most perfect in form. All the figures, in fact, are fine, many of them beautiful, but somehow the picture does not grip one as it should.

In its predella Raphael marked his entry upon a new path. Instead of the little scenes from the Bible story or the Lives of the Saints that had been customary, he gives us figures of *Faith, Hope* and *Charity,* purely Greek in spirit, each attended by little angels that are really Cupids. No one can look at these little pictures, now in the Vatican, without realizing that we stand upon the threshold of a new era, when Christian and pagan ideals will be blended into

a perfect whole. They show that already in his early days at Florence Raphael was studying the masterpieces of antiquity, and that his strangely receptive mind was making their beauty its own. It is true that the great collection of the Medici, which had been the art-school of Florence, was dispersed when they were expelled in 1494; but many had been purchased by Bernardo Ruccellai, and these were opened freely to students.

Though he had no public commissions at Florence, Raphael could not be idle when in the Tuscan capital. His mind was perhaps the most intensely creative of any in the field of art. He thought in pictures. When a subject occurred to him it presented itself before his mind's eye in all its details, usually with a landscape background of exquisite beauty. The temptation to seize the pencil and to fix eternally the fleeting forms was overwhelming, so that he was always busy. And while the government, the religious congregations and the great nobles passed him by, he was not without patrons. Besides Taddeo Taddei, Lorenzo Nasi, another accomplished humanist, was his friend. The art-loving but penurious Angelo Doni appreciated his work. Indeed, one of his tasks at Florence was to paint the portraits of Doni and his wife, Maddalena, of the great house of Strozzi. They still gaze at us from the walls of the Pitti. His is a face that haunts one, young and handsome, but strangely restless and dissatisfied. She is painted in imitation of the *Mona Lisa,* in precisely the same attitude. Perhaps it was her wish to be painted thus like the fair Gioconda, whose portrait, fresh from the hand of Leonardo, was the wonder of the world. But what a contrast between the subtle fascination and elusive smile of the Neapolitan siren and this placid Florentine bourgeoise with her bovine face, into which neither the soul nor any of its maladies has passed!

It is the wonderful series of Madonnas that Raphael

began while in Florence, the most glorious hymn that was ever sung to woman's beauty and her purity, to childhood's charming innocence, which give him his unique position in the hearts of men. In these forms they see realized their vision of the mother whom they adore, of the wife who shall be the mother of their children, of the children that they wish to have. All that is pure and holy and of good report in woman, all that is sweet and bright in childhood, is there clothed in forms of perfect loveliness. Had Raphael never painted the Stanze of the Vatican and the Sibyls of the Pace the world would have been infinitely poorer, but his popularity would have been scarcely less secure.

Perhaps the first of these immortal works was the *Madonna del Gran Duca,* so called because of the extreme love which the Grand Duke Ferdinand III of Tuscany felt for it, making it the inseparable companion of his journeys. Of all visions of woman's purity this is without doubt the purest. As she stands there holding the Divine Child on her arm, her great eyes modestly cast down, she is without a rival in the immaculate whiteness of her soul. Umbrian she is in her virgin modesty; but already the provincial quaintness of Umbria has passed away, and her appeal is to humanity's universal heart.

The year of 1506 saw a notable scattering of the great artists from Florence. Michelangelo went to resume his service with the Pope. Leonardo returned to Milan. Perugino lost his suit against Michelangelo, the court justly holding that the words were not actionable, and went back to pass his declining years in the Umbria that he loved so well. The loss to Raphael was not great. From neither Leonardo nor Michelangelo had he received any personal instruction, and their works remained behind for him to study. He had already learned all that Perugino had to teach. The departure of the giants left Florence poor in

artists but rich in art — far richer than she is to-day, when so many of her masterpieces have succumbed to the ravages of time or gone to enrich other lands. Every church was a school of painting, and the private palaces were richly adorned by the brush. Here Raphael continued his studies, and we know that he was greatly impressed by the works of Masaccio in the Carmine, motives from which he afterwards used.

At the same time a new influence came into Raphael's life. Carried away by the preaching of Savonarola and disheartened by his death, Baccio della Porta had taken the cowl as Fra Bartolommeo and had renounced the brush. Now, perhaps called upon to fill the void left by the departure of the three greatest masters of the time, he took it up again for the service of God. A close friendship soon sprang up between him and Raphael. The younger man taught him perspective, of which Raphael had demonstrated his supreme mastery in the *Marriage of the Virgin.* The Frate taught Raphael the principle of pyramidal composition, in which he excelled. Raphael took from his friend only those elements that were essential to his own development. He did not imitate his rather empty solemnity. He did not copy his bright but not wholly pleasing colors, nor his tendency to the abuse of red. He did learn the effectiveness of the pyramid, and he used it with a perfect taste and a sense of complete naturalness that the Frate never attained. In the works of the latter we too often feel that the picture has been built up in that shape. In Raphael's, the personages seem so to have assumed their positions by chance, and it is only when we stop to analyze the composition that we perceive the art.

In this same year of 1506 Raphael seems to have made a visit to Urbino. On April 23, 1506, the good Duke Guidobaldo as Captain of the Church received from Henry VII of England the Order of the Garter. So high an

honor demanded recognition, and Guidobaldo sent Baldassare Castiglione to England bearing gifts, among them the *St. George slaying the Dragon,* that is now in the Hermitage. Of course the picture may have been painted in Florence; but now in the days of his prosperity it is more than likely that Raphael returned to his old home, to see his family and to seek the patronage of his father's friend.

The wonderful series of Madonnas that Raphael painted during his Florentine sojourn are too numerous even to be mentioned in a sketch like this. M. Müntz estimates that he had painted more than sixty pictures before he was twenty-five. Too many of them are in private ownership, and so hidden from the world. A few of the prime favorites in the public galleries must be spoken of in any life of the master. The Madonnas of this period are all serene and cheerful, perfectly human presentments of maternal affection and childish innocence, with no hint of the supernatural save an occasional nimbus, and usually the scene is laid in a smiling landscape of the greatest beauty. They are all painted in the spirit of Leonardo, and reveal his influence.

The first of these in point of date is probably the *Madonna di Terranuova* at Berlin. It was the first picture in which he introduced the Infant St. John. In this case he made the mistake of introducing a third child, who has no place there and impairs the unity of the work. The Madonna is not so beautiful as those to follow, and the rocky background is less pleasing than the verdant expanses which he usually shows.

The *Madonna Tempi* at Munich is most lovely in the devotion with which the beautiful mother presses the beautiful infant to her heart.

As a wedding present for his friend Lorenzo Nasi Raphael painted the delightful *Madonna of the Goldfinch* in the Tribune of the Uffizi. It takes its name from the bird

which the Infant St. John is offering to the Christ child. The Madonna has been reading, but she turns from her book with an expression of exquisite sweetness to note the incident. The landscape background, with the lake and mountains in the distance, is most charming.

This picture had a narrow escape. In 1548 the hill of San Giorgio slipped down, crushing the Nasi home, and breaking the wooden panel, on which the Madonna was painted, into more than twenty pieces. Yet it was put together with such skill that scarcely a trace of the accident remains.

To our mind the most beautiful of all the Florentine Madonnas is she of the *Meadow* who sits so delightfully at Vienna in the green expanse with the lake and mountains in the distance. Here the little Saviour is handing a cross to St. John, who kneels to receive it. As the Virgin watches the scene there is upon her face a shade of foreboding sadness. It was painted as a gift for Taddeo Taddei, in return for his hospitality.

In order to insure truth to nature and vitality of structure it was Raphael's practice to draw his pictures first from the nude model, or, where that was impossible, from the model clothed in clinging garments. In this case the drawing from the nude remains in the gallery at Oxford, so rich in the master's drawings, and shows a form of surpassing beauty not unworthy of the angelic face that is in the finished picture.

In the *Madonna Canigiani* at Munich he introduces for the first time the aged St. Elizabeth and St. Joseph. The pyramidal form of composition that he learned from Fra Bartolommeo is here carried to excess; but the picture, with its hill-set cities in the background, is still very delightful.

Perhaps the most popular of these early Madonnas is *La Belle Jardinière* of the Louvre. It is remarkable for

the way in which the form of the Virgin dominates the landscape.

To our mind the least satisfactory of his Florentine productions is the *Madonna del Baldacchino,* which he left unfinished when he was called to Rome. But for the greater refinement and intelligence of the faces it might pass for a Fra Bartolommeo.

On the other hand, the portrait of himself in the Uffizi and the *St. Catherine of Alexandria* in the National Gallery are perfectly delightful. In the portrait, painted for his uncle Simone in 1506, we see a beardless youth with a long neck, olive complexion, great dark eyes and abundant chestnut hair — a face so spiritual that, once seen, it is never forgotten. The beautiful *St. Catherine* leans upon her wheel in a charming landscape, and her lovely face is turned to heaven with a look of sweetest resignation.

Of Raphael's movements in these Florentine days we know little. We know that he returned to Perugia several times; and it seems certain that he was in Urbino in 1506, and it is believed that he then went as far as Bologna, where he became the friend of Francia. We know that he was in Urbino in the fall of 1507, when he arranged to pay for a house that he had bought from Serafino Cervasi. Cervasi had been fined in the ecclesiastical courts for arranging a marriage within the prohibited degrees, and had to call on Raphael for prompt payment.

Raphael's highest ambition was to get some public commission at Florence, when unexpectedly there came the call to Rome. On April 21, 1508, he wrote to his uncle Simone to get "Il Prefetto," as Francesco della Rovere, heir to the Dukedom of Urbino, was called, to use his influence with Soderini to this end. It is probable that before the answer was received he was already on his way south.

II

ROMAN DAYS

In 1508, apparently in the first half, Raphael was called to Rome, to take charge of the decoration of the Stanze of the Vatican. The man who called him, Pope Julius II, Giuliano della Rovere, was the greatest pope of the Renaissance. Of humble origin, he owed his advancement to his uncle, Sixtus IV. He was an old man when he reached the papal chair, but age had not impaired his vigor nor quenched the flames of his fiery soul. He wished to be just; but his violent prejudices and ungovernable temper led him into constant excesses. He was a natural ruler of men, and the temporal power of the papacy was in his eyes far more important than the spiritual. His reign was spent in continual wars for the extension of his dominions. Yet he had one virtue rare at that time — he was free from nepotism. He sought conquests not for his family, but to increase the domains of the Church. His life was a disaster for Italy. At war with Alexander VI, he went to France, and in order to punish his enemy, induced Charles VIII to invade the Peninsula, thus bringing ruin upon the land that he loved with all his heart. As Pope, he organized the League of Cambrai that crushed Venice, and so weakened for all time Europe's chief defense against the Ottomite. Yet he did all this with entire rectitude of purpose, blinded by the violence of his passions. He was not a learned man. When Michelangelo asked Julius if he should put a book in the hand of his statue at Bologna, Julius exclaimed, "Don't talk to me of books. I am no scholar. Give me a sword." But he had a most intelligent comprehension of the fine arts, especially in their grandest

and noblest manifestations. Of all the art patrons of his time he was the most to be commended. He was quick to discern merit. Bramante, the greatest architect, Michelangelo, the greatest sculptor, and Raphael, the greatest painter, were employed at the first opportunity and retained in his service till the end. Grandiose in his schemes, he had not only undertaken the rebuilding of St. Peter's on a scale of unexampled immensity, but he proposed to tear down all Rome and rebuild it with antique splendor. At the time of Raphael's arrival in Rome he was in the exultation of victory. He had just returned from the conquest of Bologna, which had greatly extended the papal territories.

It was a strange inspiration that led Julius to send for this youth of twenty-five, who had never completed any great work in fresco, to take charge of the decoration of the Stanze. But Julius was quick to recognize genius and not afraid to trust it. Michelangelo had never done any fresco work when the Pope insisted that he should decorate the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. In vain the master pleaded that he was a sculptor, not a painter. The Pontiff insisted, and the result proved his supreme wisdom. It has been suggested that in his efforts to escape the unwelcome task Michelangelo bethought himself of the young man whom he had known at Florence and whose wonderful talents had fallen under his observation. Julius already had the chief painters of central Italy in his employ, Il Sodoma, Perugino, Pinturicchio, Peruzzi and the rest, and to none of them would he entrust the tremendous task. A new name might tempt him. So it is suggested that Michelangelo recommended Raphael. But if so, it was in vain for his purpose. The Pope, as usual, remained inflexible, and Michelangelo had to take the brush in hand, and to produce the most perfect of all his works. But if the recommendation of Raphael did not save the great sculptor

from his unwelcome undertaking, it was perhaps influential in calling Raphael to Rome.

The chief influence was no doubt Bramante. He was from Urbino, and a distant kinsman of Raphael's. In charge of the building of St. Peter's, the enterprise closest to the heart of Julius, he was in daily intercourse with his Holiness. He spoke for his young relative; and so Raphael came, looking like a beardless boy, and undertook the work.

The popes had been residing in the apartments on the first floor which Alexander VI had caused Pinturicchio to adorn in delightful fashion. But Julius, whose hatred to the Borgias was as great as their crimes, refused to occupy the rooms desecrated by the presence of "that Simoniac, that Jew," as he called Alexander. So he moved into the chambers above, which under Nicholas V had been decorated by Piero della Francesca, Bramantino, Signorelli and Perugino. The Camera della Segnatura, so called because it was there that the papal dispensations were signed, was being painted by Pinturicchio. Julius, however, was dissatisfied with his work. He discharged him, and sent for Raphael.

We do not know whether the scheme of decoration was original with Raphael, or whether it was suggested by his Holiness or some of the scholars about his court. The idea was to glorify Religion, Poetry, Philosophy and Law.

Il Sodoma had already decorated the ceiling, and some of his work was suffered to remain. Raphael, however, painted upon it the four beautiful female figures personifying his subjects, with smaller illustrative pictures. But it was upon the side walls that his genius was revealed in its greatest splendor, making this room the most perfect in its decoration of all the chambers in the world.

He began with Religion, and his work is called the *Disputà,* a word used not in the sense of a dispute, but in its Italian meaning of a friendly discussion. It is a vast semicircular composition. At the top is God the Father

with attendant angels. Below him is the Sacred Dove. In the center Christ is enthroned, with the Madonna at his right hand and John the Baptist on the left. Seated in a semicircle upon the clouds are the Fathers of the Church, the greater Saints and Adam. Below, upon the earth, are many saints and worthies. Dante is there and Savonarola, whom Julius favored because the Borgia had burned him at the stake. Bramante is there, a proof of the painter's gratitude. It is a wonderful picture, wonderful alike in the harmony of its composition and the perfection of its details. Faces so spiritual have rarely been painted; faces combining so much spirituality with intelligence and manly beauty, never. In heaven all is ordered and serene. On earth there is much movement and animation as they discuss the miracle of transubstantiation. But, numerous as are the figures, varied as are their attitudes, there is no confusion. As the apotheosis of the Christian religion the *Disputà* stands supreme.

As was to be expected, Raphael made many studies before he undertook his colossal task. More than thirty drawings for the *Disputà* have come down to us, and many more have doubtless perished. We have not so many drawings for any other of his pictures. We know, too, that he consulted Ariosto as to the persons who should be portrayed, and doubtless others lent him suggestions; for this youth of twenty-five could scarcely have been an eminent theologian.

Opposite the *Disputà* he painted the great picture that is now known by the name of the *School of Athens.* As the *Disputà* was the apotheosis of the Christian religion, so here was the apotheosis of that antique culture which the Renaissance loved so much and sought to combine with Christian ideals. Lorenzo the Magnificent had expressed the conception of the time when he said that "without the study of Plato one can be neither a good citizen nor an

enlightened Christian." Perfect as is the *Disputà,* marvelous as it is for a youth of twenty-five, its production can be understood. Raphael had been brought up in Umbria, where Christianity persisted with medieval fervor. His knowledge of the ancient world, however, must have been slight; yet here he gives us a work in which all the dignity, the wisdom and the serenity of ancient civilization are summed up as never before or since in the grandest picture ever painted, save the *Last Supper* of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo's *Creation of Man.* It is one of those miracles of genius for which there is no accounting. So we see Shakespeare, with little knowledge of antiquity save what he got from a translation of Plutarch, give us in "Julius Cæsar" the work of modern literature most deeply imbued with the spirit of ancient Rome. In these fifty philosophers gathered around Plato and Aristotle there breathes the very soul of Greece. It is said that Bramante furnished the design for the noble hall on whose steps they are gathered. In the lower right hand corner Raphael has painted himself beside his master Perugino, and again he proved his gratitude to Bramante by introducing him as Archimedes. The statues painted in the niches are noble in form, worthy to have been copied from the antique, but his own original conceptions.

In the *Parnassus,* painted above the entrance door, the very soul of poetry stands revealed. In the midst Apollo is seated, playing upon the violin, his upturned face full of inspiration. Around him are the Muses, and about these are the great poets of the ancient world and of Italy, with Homer as their chief and Dante close beside him. All is beauty, all is harmony.

The *Jurisprudence* offered fewer opportunities, but it is perhaps the most beautiful of them all. There are only three female figures with five attendant cupids, but their lineaments are so perfect, their attitudes so graceful that

they enchant every beholder. In the center sits Truth, looking into a mirror which one cupid holds, while another holds the illuminating torch. On one side is Strength, to give the Law its sanction, on the other is Moderation, to restrain excesses.

In three years the great work was finished. In 1508 Raphael had come to Rome an obscure young man; in 1511, at the age of twenty-eight, he stood the foremost painter on earth, with every eye upon him. His modesty, the sweetness of his disposition, the grace of his manners made him a universal favorite in a court crowded with the foremost men of the time. The greatest ecclesiastics and scholars were his intimate friends. A few of these occupy positions so important in Raphael's life that they must be mentioned.

The most devoted and serviceable of all Raphael's supporters was Bramante. He was not only the greatest architect of the time, but a painter, an engraver, a poet and a wit. He was one of the few who could make the grim old pontiff laugh, and Julius delighted in his companionship. His love for his young kinsman was extreme, and he never failed when the occasion offered to put in a good word on Raphael's behalf. While the other artists dwelt outside the Vatican, Bramante was housed in the Belvedere, where he was accustomed to regale his friends at sumptuous banquets enlivened by his wit.

Perhaps Raphael's next closest friend was the noble Count Baldassare Castiglione, who came to Rome first in 1510; and who in 1512 took up his permanent residence there as the representative of Urbino at the papal court. He was the most perfect gentleman of his time, a poet, a scholar, the Chesterfield of his age, without the faults of that noble lord. He was an enthusiastic student of antiquity and a keen and discriminating judge of art. He was born at Mantua in 1478, and was educated at the bril-

liant court of Lodovico il Moro. The most disinterested of men, he served the Dukes of Urbino with rare fidelity, and was most serviceable to all his friends, particularly to Raphael. He is familiar to us all in the splendid portrait by the master's hand that adorns the Louvre.

Bernardo Dovizio, called Bibbiena from the place of his birth, was equally devoted to Raphael's interests. He was the perfect type of the wary diplomatist, and in 1513 he became a cardinal. He first appears as secretary to Lorenzo the Magnificent. When the Medici were expelled from Florence he fled with Giuliano to Urbino, where he became one of the great ornaments of its cultivated court. Here he wrote and produced "Calandria," the first Italian comedy; a most licentious piece, but which was afterwards played at the Vatican with applause. Raphael has left us his portrait in the Pitti, a face of great refinement and intelligence, that speaks of the cunning diplomat.

Pietro Bembo was also made a cardinal in 1539. He was of noble Venetian family. He studied at Florence, and then went to Messina, to perfect himself in Greek under Constantine Lascaris. Before coming to Rome he went to the brilliant courts of Ferrara and Urbino, where he was received with great favor, and wrote his dialogues on love, called the "Asolani." When discoursing of love at Guidobaldo's court he was so carried away by his own eloquence that a lady exclaimed, "If you do not restrain yourself your soul will quit your body." To which he replied, "Madam, that would not be the greatest folly that love has led me to commit"; a strange sentiment for an ecclesiastic vowed to celibacy. At Ferrara he fell desperately in love with Lucretia Borgia, then Duchess of that city; but while she seems to have returned his affection, their relations remained pure, owing to the high character that Lucretia showed as Duchess of Ferrara. In Raphael's day he was papal secretary; in much favor at the papal court. He

was a passionate lover of antique art, and made a precious collection of statues, coins and medals.

Another devoted friend was Tomaso Inghirami, secretary of the Sacred College. Like Bibbiena and Bembo, he was born in 1470. Volterra was the place of his birth. When this city was sacked by the Florentines in 1472 Lorenzo the Magnificent took the infant to be reared in his own palace. As he grew up, Lorenzo supervised his studies, and later sent him as an emissary to the court of Alexander VI. He was most eloquent, and in Raphael's day was the most popular preacher in Rome. We know how he looked, for the master has left a living likeness of him in the Pitti; a stout man whose right eye is strangely cocked, looking upward and outward in a disconcerting way. He won his name of Phedra by his skill at improvisation. It was conferred upon him when on one occasion he prevented a panic in a theater by holding the audience spellbound with his improvised verses.

Baldassare Turini, president of the papal chancellery, was another faithful friend. He was one of Raphael's executors, and proved faithful to the memory of the great painter.

A man not to be forgotten was Johannes Goritz of Luxemburg, who held the office of apostolic prothonotary at the papal court. His specialty was banquets, at which he assembled all the artists, scholars and wits of Rome. Raphael was his frequent guest.

Among Raphael's closest friends were the poets and scholars Sannazaro, Tebaldeo, Navagero and Beazzano, men of great renown in their day, but whose names, save that of the first, have now passed into oblivion, so that for all their classic learning and skill in versifying they are remembered only because they loved the great painter.

The infamous Pietro Aretino, vilest and ablest of all the men who have lived by blackmail, claimed in after years to have been Raphael's friend; but his word raises no pre-

sumption of truth; and the high character of all the master's known intimates makes it unlikely that he would have consorted with such a knave, though at that time Aretino held a position at the papal court.

After the pontiffs the most munificent of Raphael's patrons was Agostino Chigi, the great banker who had come from Siena. He was the richest man of his time. He had more than two hundred business establishments in as many cities. His fleets covered the Mediterranean. More than twenty thousand men were in his service. His revenues exceeded seventy thousand gold ducats. He lived like a prince, giving banquets in which he sought to surpass the splendor of Lucullus. He early detected Raphael's genius, and until the end employed his talents in great works.

Another banker was the handsome and cultivated Bindo Altoviti, whose portrait by the master's hand adorns the gallery at Munich. The face is so remarkable for its refinement and beauty that it has been mistaken for Raphael himself. He was a great lover of the arts and devoted to Raphael's interests.

Indeed, to name all of Raphael's friends would be to name all the distinguished men of Rome save Michelangelo and Sebastian del Piombo. It is not likely that the former felt any resentment toward his younger rival. Though his manners were rough, his heart was sound. Bramante, who disliked him, was always conspiring to push Raphael into his place, and naturally the great sculptor resented this. Sebastian del Piombo was at first a friend and admirer of Raphael's. Envy, however, was the mainspring of his character, and as Raphael advanced upon his radiant path Sebastian grew to hate him with a bitter hatred. Unfortunately for him, his correspondence has been preserved, and it reveals the baseness of soul that disgraced his eminent talents.

There was never a time when the papal court was so

brilliant as under Julius II and his successor Leo X. All Italy was alive with genius. Poetry, philosophy, science, art, scholarship were intensely vital. While religious enthusiasm had grown somewhat weak in Italy, it was ardent in other lands; and the vast sums that flowed into the papal treasury placed the pontiffs in a position to patronize talent as no other sovereign could; so that most of the many men whose genius adorned the age were either residents or visitors at the papal court. Among these eminent men Raphael moved, delighting all by the charm of his manner.

Raphael was no doubt as great a favorite with the women as with the men. On the backs of drawings for the *Disputà* are three imperfect sonnets by his hand. They prove that the great poet of the brush was no great poet in words. He lacks the fluency of his father, and struggles painfully for rhymes, though rhyming is so easy in Italian, owing to its poverty in vowel sounds. They show, however, that he was in love with a lady whose social position made it necessary to conceal their amours, and that he had no cause to complain of her cruelty.

And here we may as well set out the little that is known of Raphael's love affairs. It was inevitable that one so handsome and of such delightful manners should have been much beloved; but the discretion of which he boasts in his sonnets has left scant traces of his conquests.

We know that the tender passion engaged his thoughts in Florentine days; for on the back of a fine drawing which he sent to his fellow-pupil and devoted follower, Domenico Alfani, at Perugia is a request for the love-songs of Ricciardo.

Vasari tells this story:

"He was much disposed to the gentler affections and delighted in the society of women, for whom he was ever ready

to perform acts of service. But he also permitted himself to be devoted somewhat too earnestly to the pleasures of life, and in this respect was perhaps more than duly considered and indulged by his friends and admirers. We find it related that his intimate friend Agostino Chigi had commissioned him to paint the first floor of his palace; but Raphael was at that time so much occupied with the love which he bore to the lady of his choice that he could not give sufficient attention to the work. Agostino therefore, falling at length into despair of seeing it finished, made so many efforts by means of friends and by his own care, that after much difficulty he at length prevailed on the lady to take up her abode in his house, where she was accordingly installed in apartments near those which Raphael was painting; in this manner the work was ultimately brought to a conclusion."

It is not likely that this was the lady of the sonnets, to whom concealment was so essential.

In his will Raphael makes provision for his inamorata, whose name was Margarita. There is nothing to indicate how long she had occupied that position, or to connect her with the lady of whom Vasari speaks.

During the eighteenth century a story was published, telling of Raphael's devotion to a baker's daughter, a *fornarina*. It has no support in any contemporary authority, and is apparently a pure fabrication.

In the Barbarini Palace is the portrait of a bold, black-eyed wench of plebeian features and uncovered bosom, who is called the Fornarina. That she belonged to Raphael is inferred by some from his name on her bracelet; but there is nothing to connect her with the Margarita of the will. She seems to be as different as possible from the woman whom the most refined of painters would be expected to choose. If he loved her, her appeal could not have been to his head or heart.

In the Tribune of the Uffizi is the portrait of a most beautiful woman which from time immemorial has passed

for Raphael's Fornarina. Morelli pronounced it the work of Sebastian del Piombo, and substantially all critics concurred in his judgment. Recently, however, Dr. Bode has plunged the matter into uncertainty by declaring that it is by the cunning hand of Raphael, painting in Sebastian's manner.

When Raphael had long been dead and all the witnesses had passed away, various stories of his loves were told by imaginative writers; but the scant facts we have narrated are all that we really know.

In the Pitti is a picture called the *Donna Velata, the Lady with the Veil.* Some see in this a resemblance to the *Sistine Madonna,* and imagine her to be the beloved of Raphael. The resemblance is not striking, and may be casual. The better opinion now seems to be that it is a work of the Bolognese school, and not by the hand of Raphael at all.

While Raphael was painting the Camera della Segnatura a great event occurred, pregnant with the fate of nations, though no one knew it. An obscure German monk named Martin Luther came to Rome in 1510 on business for his monastery. To his eyes all the splendor of the papal court was but corruption, its art rottenness, its love of Greek culture a return to paganism, its philosophy the babbling of fools; and he went away with the seeds of revolt deep in his soul.

Raphael painted the portrait of Pope Julius. At least three extant versions are claimed to be the original. They are found in the Uffizi, the Pitti and the National Gallery. Each has its partisans, while there are some who contend that all are merely copies of an original that is lost. At any rate, they are all wonderful portraits, showing the grim old lion in the fullness of his terrible force. When in the autumn of 1510 he went to Bologna to take charge of the war against France, Julius swore that he would never trim his

beard until the French were driven out of Italy. He returned defeated, with Bologna lost; and so his beard was left to grow.

Immense as was the labor of painting the Camera della Segnatura, it did not consume all of Raphael's time. Amongst the productions of that busy period was the *Madonna of the House of Alba* at St. Petersburg, perhaps the most delightful of all his Madonnas in his early manner. Here we find ourselves transported from Umbria to the broad expanse of the Roman Campagna, with its low mountains closing in the distance. Yet its spirit is still that of Florentine days. Most probably it was painted while he was working on the *Disputà*. In the *Virgin of the Diadem* in the Louvre the influence of Rome is apparent.

When the Camera della Segnatura was finished Julius was delighted with the result. Perugino, Il Sodoma and Pinturicchio were all sent off, and Raphael was put in full charge of the decorations, with authority to employ such assistants as he saw fit. Besides his Holiness, everyone else was clamoring for a picture from the hands of the youthful master. Realizing that he was growing old and that if the work was to be finished in his day it must be hurried on, Julius was importunate in his exactions. If Raphael had had the hundred arms of Briareus, he could not have met the demands upon him. Under the circumstances he was forced to call in many assistants. He was the idol of the young, and they all sought to enroll themselves under his banner. Even men far older than he, like his former master, Timoteo Viti, were proud to work under his orders. His studio soon became a busy workshop, where artists of every kind were carrying out his plans.

This workshop was the marvel of Rome. Artists are usually high-strung and irritable, full of jealousies and susceptibilities, so that any coöperation between them is diffi-

cult; but owing to the marvelous tact of the young master only harmony and good will reigned beneath his roof. His serene cheerfulness, his consideration for others were contagious. All loved him and were delighted to do his bidding. Vasari says:

"This was the power accorded to him by Heaven, of bringing all who approached his presence into harmony; an effect inconceivably surprising in our calling, and contrary to the nature of our artists. Yet all, I do not say of the inferior grades only, but even those who lay claim to be great personages (and of this humor our art produces immense number), became of one mind, once they began to labor in the society of Raphael, continuing in such unity and concord, that all harsh feelings and evil dispositions became subdued and disappeared at the sight of him; every vile and base thought departing from the mind before his influence. Such harmony prevailed at no other time than his own. And this happened because all were surpassed by him in friendly courtesy as well as in art; all confessed the influence of his sweet and gracious nature, which was so replete with excellence, and so perfect in all the charities, that not only was he honored by men, but even by the very animals, who would constantly follow his steps and always loved him.

"We find related, that whenever any other painter, whether known to Raphael or not, requested any design or assistance, of whatever kind, at his hands, he would invariably leave his work to do him service; he continually kept a large number of artists employed, all of whom he assisted and instructed with an affection which was rather as that of a father to his children than merely as of an artist to artists. From these things it followed that he was never seen to go to Court but surrounded and accompanied, as he left his house, by some fifty painters, all men of ability and distinction, who attended him thus to give evidence of the honor in which they had held him. He did not, in short, live the life of a painter, but that of a prince."

Once Michelangelo met him thus, and exclaimed, "You go attended like a general"; to which Raphael replied, "And you go alone, like the hangman." But we may be sure that the bitter words were said with a smile that took away their sting.

Of his disciples the ones whom he most relied on were Giulio Romano, Giovanni Francesco Penni and Perino del Vaga. They came to him young, and he trained them to imitate his style with considerable success.

A man of such distinction must have a suitable dwelling; and in 1517 Raphael purchased of the Caprivi an elegant mansion that Bramante had erected in the Borgo Nuovo, one of the streets running from the Bridge of St. Angelo to St. Peter's. It was a convenient place, for in this street dwelt most of the artists employed in the Vatican. Here Raphael lived in princely style, surrounded by his devoted disciples; entertaining at his hospitable board the greatest men in Rome. Before his time artists had been classed with artisans. He ranked with the great of the earth. One sees the respect in which he was held in the letters of the agents of the Duke of Ferrara, who dared not communicate to him their master's threats.

What has become of Raphael's home is uncertain. According to one version, it was torn down to make room for the Accoramboni Palace. According to another it still survives, and is known as the Palace of the Convertendi.

Vasari, the devoted friend of Michelangelo, exaggerates the debt that Raphael owed the great sculptor, and the world has been content to reëcho his judgment. In after years Michelangelo himself declared that Raphael owed all his art to him. This, however, was far from the truth. His work that bears the strongest evidence of Michelangelo's influence is the *Isaiah* painted for Goritz on a column in the Church of Sant' Agostino. But Raphael saw

that he was following a false route, and went no farther. It is true that at Rome a great change came over his art. It ceased to be medieval and became classic. But it was not Michelangelo that wrought the change; it was the Apollo Belvedere and the other great masterpieces of antique sculpture that adorned the Vatican and the ancient wall paintings of the Baths of Titus. He acquired strength, but it was not the tortured strength of Michelangelo. It was the serene strength that breathes from the antique marbles. In the *School of Athens* their influence first makes itself fully felt, and never again is it absent from his works. Of all moderns he best embodies the Greek ideal while not losing his hold on the ideals of Christianity.

No sooner had Raphael finished the Camera della Segnatura than his Holiness demanded that he should decorate the adjacent chamber, called now the Camera dell' Eliodoro, from the picture of *Heliodorus driven from the Temple,* which is its most striking feature. It had been decorated by Piero della Francesca, Bramantino and Peruzzi. Julius ordered that their work be destroyed, to make way for his new favorite. Raphael, more appreciative of their merits, had copies made before they were effaced, that they might not be wholly lost. On the four walls, in addition to the picture that has given the room its name, he depicted the *Mass of Bolsena,* the *Defeat of Attila* and the *Deliverance of St. Peter from Prison.*

This room is far inferior to the Camera della Segnatura. That was substantially the work of his own hands; this is chiefly the work of pupils carrying out his designs. In the former the brushwork is perfect; here it is too often crude. But a greater difference still is in the choice of subjects. In the former chamber he dealt with the eternal themes that appeal to all men in all ages. In the chamber of Heliodorus he sinks into the dreary field of historical painting. He no longer appeals to the great heart of hu-

manity that is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. He merely relates the triumphs of the Papacy. And save the *Mass of Bolsena* the pictures all have reference to current events. In the first we see Heliodorus driven from the temple by the avenging angels while Julius looks on, borne in his papal chair by Giulio Romano, Raphael's favorite pupil, and Marcantonio Raimondi, the great engraver, who was spreading Raphael's conceptions through every land. It refers to the plans of Julius to drive the French from the sacred soil of Italy.

The *Miracle of Bolsena* was painted almost entirely by Raphael's own hand. Brushwork and color are alike admirable. Again Julius dominates the scene, kneeling opposite the unbelieving priest, who is converted by the sight of the blood dropping from the holy wafer. The inscription shows that it was finished on November 1, 1512.

While painting these frescoes Raphael executed one of his greatest masterpieces, the *Madonna di Foligno,* which marks a step in his advance to the supreme glory of the *Sistine Madonna.* It was not painted for the town whose name it bears, but in gratitude for the escape of its donor, Sigismondo Conti, the papal secretary, from a shell that burst near him during the siege of that place. In the background Foligno is seen, and across the sky above it is the shell's flaming path, which is usually spoken of as a rainbow. Seated upon the clouds, in a circular glory of light, surrounded by many cherubs, is the Madonna, holding in her arms the Divine Child. She is different from the Madonnas of Florence. She is not less beautiful, but something unearthly has entered into her face, an expression of wistful sadness that no copy, not even a photograph, can reproduce. It was hung above the high altar in the great church of Ara Coeli on the Capitol, and is now in the Vatican. Conti died on February 23, 1512, before the picture was finished. In him Raphael lost a true friend who had

been the friend of his father, and who is mentioned with honor in Giovanni Santi's poem.

About the same time the master painted with the help of his pupils the *Madonna del Divino Amore* at Naples and the *Madonna dell' Impannata* at Florence. Both are fine in conception; but the execution shows how much the best of his disciples lacked of his supreme mastery. The latter was painted for Raphael's friend, Bindo Altoviti. It is named for the linen blind to the window behind the Virgin.

On the eve of All Saints, 1512, Julius II went to see the ceiling of the Sistine, now complete. He was ill at the time; but, upheld by the force of his iron will, he gazed with admiration on Michelangelo's sublime masterpiece, and knew that he had done well in compelling its execution. But his race was nearly run, and even his relentless determination could not carry much farther a body worn out by age and the violence of ungoverned passions. On Christmas Eve he took to his bed, and it was realized that the hand of death was on him. Those were anxious days for Raphael. Affectionate by nature, he loved the old lion who had been to him so faithful a friend. In his anxiety he refused to talk about business. On February 20, 1513, Julius died. To Raphael's sorrow at his loss was added anxiety as to his own future. A pontiff who would be so fond of the arts and so munificent a patron it would be hard to find.

The result, however, proved in no wise to his disadvantage. On March 11, 1513, Giovanni de' Medici was elected pope, and assumed the title of Leo X. The son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, he had received an accomplished education not only in the classics, but in all the elegancies of life. At fifteen he was made a cardinal. We know exactly how he looks, for perhaps the greatest of all Raphael's portraits is that in the Pitti where he sits attended by his kinsmen, the cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Luigi de'

Rossi. The likeness is so astonishing that it is said that Turini, president of the Chancellery, took it for reality, and, kneeling before it, offered his Holiness the pen to sign some documents. A large fat man, good humor and self indulgence are written on every feature. His motto was *Suave, "gently,"* and he lived up to it. He was kind hearted and generous to the point of reckless prodigality. The fame of his liberality was so great that all Rome rejoiced at his election. The feasts and processions on the occasion of his inauguration exceeded anything ever seen in papal Rome. Eight thousand ducats per month were spent upon his table alone, where Julius had allowed his major domo only fifteen hundred for all expenses. Temperate himself, he yet loved to see all around him eat and drink. Each evening he spread a splendid banquet, and the feasting lasted far into the night, attended with a great flow of wit and no little talk on letters and art. On his election he said to Giuliano de' Medici, "Brother, since God has given us the papacy, let us enjoy it," and he lived on that principle. To the people of his own city his generosity was unbounded. All Florence came to Rome, and was gorged. Each morning he had placed by his side a salver heaped with gold-pieces for little gifts, and each night it was empty.

Unhappily, in this world those who dance must pay the piper. With an income of four hundred thousand ducats, equal to four million dollars, Leo was always in straits for money. He sold all ecclesiastical preferments. To fill his empty coffers he created thirty cardinals at one time. He finally resorted to the sale of indulgences, which precipitated the Protestant revolt. Meanwhile, in Rome all went merry as a marriage bell. They heard the distant mutterings of the great storm that was gathering beyond the Alps; but to Leo and his advisers it seemed a matter of slight importance — one of those provincial insurrections of which the Church had already put down so many.

If Leo was less discriminating in his patronage of art than his illustrious predecessor, he was more generous. But art must be cheerful and administer to the pleasures of life. Michelangelo, with his titanic power and gloom, was out of favor, and was sent to waste his days at Carrara, getting out marble for the façade of San Lorenzo at Florence. Signorelli, Michelangelo's not unworthy forerunner, applied in vain for work. Raphael was the man of the hour. His pictures combined beauty with serenity. They were fair and cheerful, like the gods of Greece. They were pleasant to live with. Their contemplation heightened the joy of life. Moreover, Raphael's charming manners made him without an effort the perfect courtier, and every day he grew in favor with his Holiness. Leo not merely overwhelmed him with artistic commissions, but he made him a chamberlain at the papal court and a Knight of the Golden Spur; thus placing him in a social grade apart from all rivals.

The first task that the new pontiff laid on him was the completion of the frescoes in the Camera d'Eliodoro. They were not now to glorify Julius, however, but his successor.

Over the entrance door the master painted the *Deliverance of St. Peter from Prison.* The reference was to the almost miraculous escape of Leo when taken prisoner by the French at the battle of Ravenna. On the other side wall he depicted the *Defeat of Attila,* showing the great barbarian whose ferocity had given him the name of the Scourge of God, driven back with his savage hordes from the gates of Rome by the calm majesty of Pope Leo I and the apparition of St. Peter and St. Paul sweeping through the air with drawn swords. His Holiness has the features of Leo X, and he rides the gray horse that bore him at Ravenna. The picture refers to the expulsion of the French from Italy after the Battle of Novara, won by the coalition of which Leo was the head.

In the "Cortegiano" Castiglione says that two cardinals reproached Raphael with painting the cheeks of St. Peter and St. Paul red, and that the master replied that they were blushing to see the Church ruled by such men. It seems unlikely that so consummate a courtier would have used such language to princes of the Church.

When this room was finished in June, 1514, Raphael had acquired a new position in the realm of art — he was the greatest illustrator that the world has ever seen. No one has ever told a story in pictures so well as he, combining clearness with animation and an agreeable distribution of groups. Henceforth he must be recognized as the greatest of all composers with pencil or brush. His fame as an illustrator was to be confirmed by the two later Stanze, by the Cartoons and the Loggie; but already he had shown a skill in that department of his art that none could match. Unhappily, the execution, entrusted chiefly to his disciples, is far inferior to the conception and design. When one passes from the serene and perfect beauty of the Camera della Segnatura into the other chambers, one feels that one is descending into a lower world.

On March 14, 1514, Raphael lost Bramante, the most devoted of all his friends. He was buried in the crypt of St. Peter's. All the artists in Rome attended the funeral and Raphael was chief mourner. It must have been a severe blow to his heart; but from a worldly point of view it redounded to his advantage. On his deathbed the great architect recommended Raphael as his successor in the building of St. Peter's. Leo acted on his advice, associating with Raphael two of Bramante's assistants, Fra Giocondo, who was over eighty, and Giuliano da San Gallo, who was over seventy. The idea was that before passing off the stage they might transmit their knowledge to the young master.

Raphael entered upon his new duties with enthusiasm.

At first his appointment was provisional; but when at the end of three months he presented his wooden model of the building, it was made permanent, with a salary of three hundred gold ducats. This model has perished. We only know that for the Greek cross of Bramante a Latin cross was substituted. We doubt whether it was an improvement; but in the absence of accurate information we can only judge by the result when the edifice was finally completed as a Latin Cross by Carlo Maderna. Probably the change was imposed by the ecclesiastical authorities, who did not wish in the central shrine of Western Christianity to sanction the conception of the Greek Church.

In Giuliano Leno Raphael had an admirable master of the work who had served under Bramante. He was immensely rich according to the standards of the time. Worth eighty thousand ducats, he labored only from love of the work.

Having undertaken to build the world's greatest edifice, Raphael set himself seriously to the study of architecture. Marco Fabio Calvo, of the noble house of Guiccioli of Ravenna, and so akin to the lady who afterwards captivated Lord Byron with her smiles, was a great Greek scholar. He was very old, but the master brought him to Rome, took him into his own house, and had him translate Vitruvius into Italian. Armed with the works of the greatest of ancient authorities on architecture, Raphael felt more secure. The necessity of strengthening various piers in St. Peter's before proceeding and the want of funds prevented his doing much toward the carrying out of his plans there; but he designed the Villa Madama on Monte Mario, the Pandolfini Palace at Florence, and various other buildings. Competent judges rank his architectural abilities highly.

Two letters of Raphael's written in this year are of peculiar interest. To Castiglione he writes:

"*Sir Count:* I have made several designs in accordance with the ideas which you suggested; and if I believe my flatterers, I have satisfied them all. Yet I have not satisfied my own judgment, since I fear that I shall not have pleased yours. I send the designs, and beg you will make a selection, if you think any of them worthy of acceptance. Our Lord (the Pope) has done me great honor by throwing a considerable burden on my shoulders — that of attending to the building of St. Peter's. I hope I shall not sink under it; the more so as the model which I have made is approved by His Holiness, and praised by many intelligent persons. But I soar in thought to higher spheres — I should like to discover the beautiful forms of ancient edifices, and know not whether my flight may not be the flight of Icarus. I gather much light from Vitruvius, but not as much as I require.

"With regard to the 'Galatea' I should consider myself a great master if it realized one half of the many things of which you write; but I gather from your words the love you bear me, and I should tell you that to paint a beauty one should see many, the sole condition being that you should be with me to make choice of the best. Good judgment being as scarce as handsome women, I make use of a certain idea which comes to my mind. But whether this, in itself, has any excellence of art I know not; I shall do what I can to attain it."

The other to his uncle Simone di Ciarla.

"To my dearest Cousin, Simone di Battista di Ciarla in Urbino.

"*Dearest, in place of a father:* I have received one of yours; most dear to me because it assures me that you are not angry, which indeed would be wrong considering how tiresome it is to write when one has nothing of consequence to say. But now, being of consequence, I reply to tell you as much as I am able to communicate.

"And first, in reference to taking a wife, I reply that I am quite content in respect of her whom you first wished to give me, and I thank God constantly that I took neither her nor another, and in this I was wiser than you who wished me to take her. I am sure that you, too, are now aware that I

would not have the position I now hold, since I find myself at this present in possession of things in Rome worth three thousand ducats of gold, and receipts of fifty scudi in gold, because His Holiness has given me a salary of three hundred gold ducats for attending to the building of St. Peter's, which I shall never fail to enjoy so long as my life lasts; and I am certain of getting others, and am also paid for what I do to what amount I please, and I have begun to paint another room for His Holiness which will amount to one thousand two hundred ducats of gold. So that, dearest Cousin, I do honor to you and all relatives, and to my country; yet for all that, I hold you dear in the center of my heart, and when I hear your name, I feel as if I heard that of a father; and do not complain of me because I do not write, because I have to complain of you that you sit pen in hand all day and let six months go by between one letter and the other. Still, with all that, you will not make me angry with you, as you do wrongly with me.

"I have come fairly out of the matter of a wife, but, to return to that, I answer that you may know that Santa Maria in Porticu (Cardinal Bibbiena) wants me to have one of his relatives, and with the assent of you and the cousin priest (Bartolommeo Santi) I promised to do what his reverend lordship wanted, and I cannot break my word. We are now more than ever on the point of settling, and presently I shall advise you of everything. Have patience, as the matter is in such a good way and then, should it not come off, I will do as you may wish, and know that if Francesco Buffa has offers for me, I have some of my own also, and I can find a handsome wife of excellent repute in Rome, as I have heard. She and her relatives are ready to give me three thousand gold scudi as a dowry, and I live in a house at Rome, and one hundred ducats are worth more here than two hundred there; of this be assured.

"As to my stay in Rome, I cannot live anywhere else for any time, if only because of the building of St. Peter's, as I am in the place of Bramante; but what place in the world is more worthy than Rome, what enterprise more worthy than St.

Peter's, which is the first temple of the world and the largest building that has even been seen, the cost of which will exceed a million in gold? And know that the Pope has ordered the expenditure on that building of sixty thousand ducats a year, and he never gives a thought to anything else. He has given me a companion, a most learned old friar of more than eighty years of age. The Pope sees that he cannot live long; he has resolved to give him to me as a companion, for he is a man of high reputation, and of the greatest acquirements, in order that I may learn from him, and if he has any secret in architecture that I may become perfect in that art. His name is Fra Giocondo; and the Pope sends for us every day and chats a little with us about the building.

"I beg you to be good enough to go to the Duke and Duchess and tell them this, as I know they will be pleased to hear that one of their servants does them honor, and recommend me to them as I continually stand recommended to you. Salute all my friends and relatives for me, and particularly Ridolfo, who has so much love for me.

"The first of July, 1514.

"Your RAFFAEL, painter in Rome."

The tone in which he discusses his marriage as a cold matter of business is offensive to our sentiments; but such is still the fashion in Latin countries. The death of Bibbiena's niece saved Raphael from the necessity of marrying her to avoid offending his powerful patron; and most likely he was glad to retain his liberty.

This year of 1514 was one of extraordinary activity for Raphael. Amongst other works, he painted for Chigi the most decorative of all his pictures, the *Sibyls* of Santa Maria della Pace. Nothing can be lovelier than this picture. Three of the sibyls are young and supremely beautiful. Their attitudes are of perfect grace. They have not the inspired and tragic look of Michelangelo's. They are as serene as they are fair to look upon. The attendant angels are ideals of childish beauty. The composition is

perfect. Vasari, no mean judge, declares this to be the most faultless of all the master's works. The prophets above were painted for him by his old instructor Timoteo Viti, now his disciple, and are much inferior.

It is said that when it was finished Raphael asked 900 ducats for the work. Chigi's cashier offered him 500. Raphael proposed to submit the matter to the arbitration of any artist in Rome. Knowing the strained relations between Raphael and Michelangelo, the cashier chose the latter. The great sculptor went to view the work, and pointing to the head of one of the sibyls said, "That head alone is worth 100 ducats." "Then how much are the others worth?" asked the man of business. "They are worth not less," replied Michelangelo. When the cashier reported the result to the great banker, Chigi answered with a laugh, "Pay him the 900 ducats at once, and be very polite, for if he should charge us for the draperies, we should be ruined."

Raphael was not less generous in speaking of his great rival. He always said that he thanked God that he lived in the same days as Michelangelo. The rough manners of the latter made him many enemies, who were continually scheming to supplant him by Raphael; but there is no proof that Raphael was a party to any of these intrigues.

It is supposed that in this same year was painted the most popular of all pictures, the *Madonna della Sedia.* It is the perfect embodiment of sane and wholesome motherhood. There is about it nothing supernatural, nothing but the love of a very beautiful young woman for her very beautiful child; but it is perfect in its way, and goes straight to every heart. No hand save his own touched this masterpiece.

We know that it was about 1514 that he painted the most faultless of all his pagan works, the *Triumph of Galatea* in the Farnesina Villa, which had just been built by the great

banker, and was then called the Villa Chigi. This picture of Galatea floating upon her sea-shell attended by nymphs and tritons breathes the very soul of Greek poetry. As a picture it is perfect. As a decoration it is too small for the immense room. It is said that when Michelangelo went to see it he drew on the other wall a colossal head, and that when Raphael returned he comprehended the rebuke, and went no further with his scheme of decoration. The giant head is still there to confirm the story.

About this time Raphael painted with his own hand the *Madonna of the Fish* at Madrid. It was painted for the church of San Domenico at Naples. In that city diseases of the eyes are common, and so Tobit is introduced, holding the fish that cured his father's blindness. It is a splendid picture, strong and beautiful, but less charming than the lovely little *Madonna of the Lamb* that hangs beside it, painted when the master was a youth in Florence.

For Count Vincenzo Ercolani of Bologna Raphael designed the greatest little pictures ever painted save the *Crucifixion* of Albert Dürer, the *Vision of Ezekiel.* It proves that grandeur of style is not dependent on size. This vision of God the Father, supported by the angel and the three beasts of the Apocalypse, is one of the most sublime conceptions. Unhappily the work of painting was entrusted to Giulio Romano, and the result is not entirely satisfactory.

As soon as Raphael had finished the Camera d'Eliodoro, Leo set him to work to decorate a third chamber, which has since been called the Camera del Borgo for its principal picture, the *Burning of the Borgo.* In the year 847, during the reign of Leo IV, the Borgo, the suburb about St. Peter's, caught fire. Fanned by a violent wind, the flames threatened the destruction of the venerable fane itself when by his prayers the Pope checked their advance. Again Leo X is glorified. Raphael gives his features to his great prede-

cessor. The picture is of epic character. It is not a suburb of medieval Rome that is burning; it is Troy. In Virgil the master found his inspiration. In the composition, in the drawing of the nude figures, it is a masterpiece. Unhappily, Raphael, overwhelmed with work, had to leave its execution to his pupils, and the workmanship is coarse. The picture has been criticized because, though it is daylight, the people are represented escaping scantily clad as from their beds; but if the fire occurred in the early hours of a summer morning, that would be natural.

After Raphael's death Sebastian del Piombo painted over some of the heads in this picture. But his presumption met with speedy punishment. He was showing the Stanze to the great Titian. When they reached this room the latter exclaimed indignantly, "Who is the arrogant and ignorant man who has dared thus to daub over these heads?" It is said that the face of Sebastian became truly of lead (piombo) beneath the rebuke.

Leo X again appears in the picture of the *Defeat of the Saracens* by Leo IV, when the papal fleet, aided by a storm, overwhelmed the invaders off the coast near Ostia. It refers to a recent attempt of the Turks to invade Italy, which had been defeated by a coalition under the Pope. Again the fine design is unworthily rendered by pupils.

Before the other two walls were covered the political situation had changed. The French, led by their brilliant young sovereign, Francis I, had invaded Italy, and on September 13 and 14, 1515, at the battle of Marignano had overwhelmed their foes. Leo was quick to accept the situation. He went to meet the conqueror, and threw himself into his arms. Thus he not only saved Florence to his family, but the evil Lorenzo de' Medici was allowed to wrest Urbino from Francesco Maria della Rovere, nephew of the late Guidobaldo and its lawful sovereign. To celebrate the event, Raphael painted the *Coronation of Charle-*

magne by Leo III, giving to the monarch the features of Francis I and to the Pope those of Leo X. The room was completed with the *Oath of Leo III,* when he refused to be tried by Charlemagne and cleared himself of the charges against him by his own oath. The application of the picture to the existing conditions was obvious, and was made more apparent by the inscription, "To God, not to men, belongs the judging of bishops." As might be expected of works owing their origin to current policies, these are the least interesting of the series and the worst painted. The design, however, is as admirable as the subjects would permit. It was 1517 when the work was completed, and only three more years of the master's short life remained.

In this chamber Raphael spared the decorations which he found upon the ceiling. They were the work of his old master Perugino, and he would not allow sacrilegious hands to be laid upon them.

It is fairly certain that when Leo went to Bologna to meet the French King, Raphael was in his suite, and that he then met Francia, who became his ardent friend and admirer.

In 1514 or 1515 Raphael painted for the Chapel of the Saint in the Church of San Giovanni in Monte at Bologna his famous picture of *St. Cecilia.* It was ordered by Cardinal Pucci, papal datary, for a curious reason. The cardinal's voice was so unmusical that when he intoned the mass people were forced to laugh. Finally he prayed to St. Cecilia, who inspired a singer in the Sistine choir to teach him music in six months. In gratitude he ordered the picture, which is one of Raphael's masterpieces. Earthly instruments, even the organ in her hand, fall to pieces as the angels sing to the enraptured Saint and her attendants.

Raphael sent the picture to his friend Francia to hang. According to Vasari, Francia died of vexation when he saw

how far he was outdone. Nothing could be more improbable. Francia was a generous man, devoted to Raphael, and the picture must have given him great pleasure. He died shortly afterwards, but of the infirmities of age.

By a brief of August 23, 1515, Leo X gave Raphael authority to inspect and purchase all ruins within ten miles of Rome, with a view to getting building stones for St. Peter's; charging him, however, to save all stones bearing an inscription. The master entered upon his duties with enthusiasm. Instead of converting the ruins into a quarry, as so many of his barbarous predecessors had done and so many of his still more barbarous successors were yet to do, he formed the plan of making on paper a reconstruction of ancient Rome in its pristine splendor. Thenceforth, accompanied by Bembo and other learned friends, he spent a great part of his time amid the ancient buildings, then far more numerous and complete than they are to-day, measuring and planning, dreaming his glorious dream.

In 1516 Raphael decorated the bath-room of his friend Cardinal Bibbiena in the Vatican with the triumphs of Venus and Cupid. It is now deemed unbecoming for a dignitary of the Church to have a bath-room so adorned, and it is closed to the public. In those days no one saw in it any cause of offense, and Raphael's designs aroused universal admiration, as indeed they might. We know them only by old drawings, but they are exquisite. Nothing lovelier is to be found in Pompeii. In the Baths of Titus, the Palaces of the Cæsars and other ancient buildings there were found decorations in the antique style quite similar to those now familiar in Pompeii and Herculaneum. These suggestions the master used in a way that would have excited the admiration of the ancients, making a thing of exquisite and dainty beauty.

Under his orders Giovanni da Udine and Francesco Penni copied from antique originals that have now been

lost the lovely figures that are known as Raphael's *Hours.* They are like the beautiful maidens that one sees floating through the air on Pompeiian walls, but more charming even than the best of these.

In 1516 Raphael again, we may believe with reluctance, returned to a painful subject, and for the Church of Lo Spasimo at Palermo painted the picture of Christ falling under the weight of the Cross that now adorns the Prado, called *Lo Spasimo di Sicilia.* It is a powerful and realistic picture. It had a strange adventure. On the way to Palermo the ship bearing it was lost with all on board. The picture, securely boxed, floated uninjured into the port of Genoa, and was hailed with frantic rejoicings as a miracle. At last the good monks of Palermo heard what had become of their picture, and demanded its surrender. The Genoese refused; but finally they were compelled by the Pope to give it up on payment of large salvage.

The design of *Lo Spasimo* is taken from the similar scene in the *Great Passion* of Albert Dürer. The great Italian and the great German were friends and corresponded, though they never met. Dürer sent Raphael his portrait, painted on thin linen, so that it could be equally well seen on both sides, and Raphael sent him a drawing that is still preserved in the Albertina at Vienna, with an inscription in Dürer's handwriting.

The last of Raphael's pictures of the Virgin and Child, the *Sistine Madonna,* is the greatest of all, and in the opinion of the majority of men it is the greatest picture on earth. In this presentation of the Mother of God appearing upon the clouds with her divine child upon her arm there is something so high and holy, so full of spiritual elevation and intellectual power, that the most callous stand awestruck before it. In the great, sweet eyes of the Madonna, in the great, haunting, almost menacing eyes of her son, who seems already to foresee the day when he shall

come to judge the world, there is something that seems superhuman and divinely inspired.

How he could have been induced to paint his masterpiece for the obscure Sistine monks of Piacenza is a mystery. Kings and the Supreme Pontiff, cardinals and dignitaries of all sorts were clamoring for works by his hand, and thankful to get something that he had designed and which a pupil had put upon the canvas. Many, like the powerful Duke of Ferrara, could not even get this, and were expressing their disappointment in passionate terms. The beautiful Isabella d'Este, the uncrowned queen of the Renaissance, was vainly appealing to him to finish the portrait of her son. Deaf to all their entreaties, which in the Duke of Ferrara's case became menaces, he painted his great masterpiece all with his own hand for an obscure monastery in a provincial town. It is not surprising that when this heavenly vision came before his mind's eye he was not willing to trust another with its realization; but, having painted it, it is surprising that he did not yield it to the Pope or to some of his illustrious patrons.

Strange to say, no drawings for the Sistine Madonna are known to exist. Possibly he painted directly on the canvas, so intense was the inward vision.

In 1515 and 1516 Raphael made the cartoons that are now in South Kensington. Below the pictures on the walls of the Sistine Chapel the space was bare. While St. Peter's was being rebuilt all the great church functions were held here, and the Pope wished tapestries made to be hung on great occasions. Raphael was commissioned to make ten designs, illustrating the Acts of the Apostles. The result was ten great masterpieces, pictures that tell their story with equal dignity and clearness. They were sent to Pieter van Aelst at Brussels, who wove the tapestries. These were first displayed in the Sistine Chapel on December 26,

1519. The cartoons remained at Brussels. Three of them were lost, but Rubens bought the remaining seven for Charles I. When the treasures of that unhappy monarch were sold, they were purchased by Cromwell for the British nation for £300. For each of the designs Raphael received a thousand golden ducats, while the weavers received fifteen hundred for each of the tapestries.

In 1517 the master undertook to decorate the Loggia of the Vatican. There were thirteen small domes, and in each he caused to be painted four pictures from the Bible. These are called the "Bible of Raphael." It is noteworthy that while in his illustrations from Holy Writ Michelangelo had chosen the terrible scenes, Raphael selects those that are pleasant and cheerful. The work was under the charge of a number of artists with Giulio Romano at their head. As illustrations the pictures cannot be surpassed. No story was ever better told. But the most delightful portion of the work is the arabesques in stucco and paint executed under the supervision of Giovanni da Udine. They were suggested by the grotesques in the ruins of ancient Rome; but they are infinite in their variety and exquisite in their beauty. The world furnishes no other such exhibition of the play of fancy. One could study them for weeks without exhausting their treasures. The work was prosecuted with such diligence that it was finished in June, 1519. It constitutes the most wonderful piece of decoration on earth.

For the loggia of Chigi's villa, now the Farnesina, Raphael designed his delightful series of pictures illustrating the myth of Cupid and Psyche. The undertaking was finished in December, 1518. Unhappily, save for one of the Graces, which was painted by the master's own hand, the work is that of his pupils, and the lovely designs have been spoiled in the transcription. When it was opened to view Leonardo Sellaio wrote to Michelangelo, "The ceil-

ing of Agostino Chigi's villa, which has just been displayed, is a disgrace to the master, and worse, a great deal, than the last of the Vatican chambers." It has since been injured by Carlo Maratta's crude restoration; but through all the faults of the bunglers the beauty of Raphael's conception shines out.

For Chigi's chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo Raphael designed the *Creation of the Planets,* which was carried out in mosaic on the ceiling. In the center is God the Father. Around him are the planets represented by ancient divinities. This fashion of mixing Christian and pagan ideas in a place of Christian worship now seems odd to us; but it suited the tastes of the time.

Two of Raphael's greatest pictures were painted to be sent by Lorenzo de' Medici as presents to the King of France, as a bribe for his connivance in Lorenzo's evil designs on Urbino. These were the great Holy Family known as the *Holy Family of Francis I* and the *St. Michael.* Both are now in the Louvre; and both, while drawn by Raphael, were painted largely by Giulio Romano, whose dark hues, hard outlines and metallic luster are only too apparent. Yet despite the faults of their execution the design and conception rank them among great masterpieces. In none of his works are there types of more perfect beauty than in the *Holy Family,* and the *St. Michael* is the most beautiful youth ever painted by mortal brush. With what serenity, with what godlike ease, does he overwhelm his foe! It is worthy to be placed beside the Apollo Belvedere. Louis XIV, that master of effect, had it hung above his throne, protected by shutters, which were opened to reveal its glories when the monarch took his seat. The pictures were finished on May 8, 1518, and dispatched to France, where they were hung in the palace at Fontainebleau. The better opinion is that the figure of St. Michael was painted by the master's own hand.

Of these pictures the spiteful Sebastian del Piombo wrote to Michelangelo:

"I am sorry that you should not have been in Rome to see two pictures that have been sent to France. They are by the Prince of the Synagogue (Raphael), and in a style altogether contrary to your ideas. They contain figures that look as if they had been smoked — figures that seem to be made of shining steel — all light and dark. But they have beautiful frames."

The last picture that Raphael painted was the *Transfiguration.* It was ordered in 1517, but was not quite finished when the master died. The Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, afterward Pope Clement VII, wishing to adorn the church in Narbonne, of which he was the patron, ordered two pictures, one of Sebastian del Piombo and one of Raphael. The cunning prelate no doubt calculated that by pitting the rivals against one another he would induce each to do his best. Nor was he mistaken. Sebastian got Michelangelo to aid him with the drawings, and produced promptly the splendid *Raising of Lazarus* in the National Gallery. Raphael, overwhelmed with commissions, was slow to get to work. Finally he painted what used to be considered his masterpiece, a very great picture, though not to be compared with the *Sistine Madonna.* It has been justly criticized for its lack of unity, the episode of the maniac boy in the foreground having but a slight connection with the miracle taking place on the mount. After the death of the master the picture was deemed too precious to be sent to a provincial French town, and it was hung over the altar in San Pietro in Montorio. It is now in the Vatican, in a room recently designed for its reception. For this picture Raphael made many drawings, no doubt moved by his anxiety not to be outdone by his venomous adversary.

Before his death Raphael had planned the decoration of the large hall adjoining the Stanze, now called the Hall

of Constantine, and his designs were carried out in part, at least, by his pupils when he had passed away. The chief picture, representing the defeat of Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge, called the *Battle of Constantine,* was certainly drawn by him. No one else could plan a battle picture so full of varied action and yet so completely welded into a whole, so full of passion and yet so rhythmical. Constantine upon his splendid charger seems as irresistible as the mounted angel who drives Heliodorus from the Temple.

Foolish stories are told to account for Raphael's untimely death. The real cause was the Roman fever, caught, as many others have caught it, while he was studying the ruins of ancient Rome. His constitution, never too strong, was undermined by excessive labor. His duties as architect of St. Peter's were enough for one man. His labors among the ruins were likewise enough in themselves. In addition he was designing houses, painting pictures and supervising the labors of fifty subordinate artists. No matter what was required, Raphael was called upon to do it. He even designed the scenery for the theatrical representations in which the Pope was interested, and was compelled to paint upon the wall the life-sized portrait of the pontiff's deceased elephant. No wonder that his health gave way. On March 29, 1520, he was taken sick. His frail body, worn out by labors that would have wearied Hercules, needed strengthening nourishment to resist the assaults of the malady; but according to the barbarous practice of the time the physicians bled him, and so drained away his vital forces. On April 6, between nine and ten in the evening, he died. All Rome was filled with mourning. The Pope wept bitterly. Raphael's disciples were inconsolable. They placed his body in state with the *Transfiguration* above his head. Everyone flocked to take a last look at the beloved lineaments, so wasted by disease but still so beautiful in the marble pallor

of death. In Southern lands interments are prompt, and next day he was buried in the Pantheon — Santa Maria Rotonda, as it is ecclesiastically called — in the chapel which he had prepared for himself. All the artists in Rome and many great dignitaries were in attendance. Cardinal Bembo wrote his Latin epitaph, the last lines of which have been thus happily translated:

> "Living, great Nature feared he might outvie
> Her works, and dying fears herself to die."

All the poets of Italy wrote verses in his honor.

Raphael left an estate of 16,000 ducats, equivalent to $160,000 in our money. This he distributed among relatives and friends by a will executed during his last illness. Provision, as we have said, was made for his inamorata. His drawings and the implements of his art were left to his best beloved disciples, Giulio Romano and Giovanni Francesco Penni, who carried out his contracts as best they could. Then at last the poor nuns of Monte Luce at Perugia received the picture for which they had waited so long and on which they had made the first payment in 1505; but it was by the pupils' hands.

In 1833 his tomb was opened, and for a month his bones, which were well preserved, were exposed to the public gaze. Three casts of his head were made. Then he was re-interred with great pomp, and we may hope that he will henceforth sleep undisturbed beneath that stupendous dome that he loved so much.

Titian

From the portrait by himself, Uffizi, Florence

35
41
15
91

TITIAN

1477–1576

I

EARLY YEARS

A FEW years ago no one doubted that Titian was born in 1477, and that when he died in 1576 he was in his hundredth year. We have his own explicit declaration to that effect. Writing to Philip II on August 1, 1571, he says: "I feel assured that your Majesty's clemency will cause a careful consideration to be made of the services of an old servant of the age of ninety-five." It is true that old men sometimes forget their age; but this could not have been true of Titian, who preserved his faculties unimpaired until the end. Recently, however, Mr. Herbert Cook has adduced some very strong arguments for a later date, even urging that the master was not born until 1489 or 1490. Still, persuasive as he is, we do not feel that he overcomes Titian's own evidence, and for the purposes of this life we shall adhere to the old chronology.

Titian was fortunate in the place of his birth. He first saw the light at Pieve di Cadore, one of the most beautiful spots on earth, in the heart of the Dolomites, beside the crystalline waters of the swift flowing Piave and beneath the shadow of the sublime Antelao, one of the giants of the land. It was a land poor in natural resources, but rich in beauty, the home of a brave and hardy race. From the scanty soil the inhabitants could wring only grain enough to support them for three months of the year, and the most imperative duty of the local government was the importation and storage of provisions. The inhabitants mostly

earned their livelihood by felling the timber upon the mountains and floating it down the Piave to Venice, or by working in the now exhausted iron mines.

Titian came of an ancient race. When Cadore first emerges into notice from the chaos of the Middle Ages it was ruled over by counts of the name of Guecello, which later became twisted into Vecelli or Vecellio, the surname of the master. When the counts were succeeded by podestàs in 1321, the first podestà was also a Guecello. We do not know that these were ancestors of the painter; but there is every reason to believe that they were. As far back as we can trace the family, it was a leading one in the community. Its members were either lawyers or soldiers. Titian's grandfather, Conte Vecelli, and his father, Gregorio, were both among Cadore's most distinguished citizens. Gregorio, like most of the family, lived to be very old, and when his son was in Venice winning an immortality of fame, he was elected to a number of important offices in his mountain home.

Cadore was for centuries an independent community; but as larger and stronger states arose from the medieval confusion, the time came when it had to choose between the Empire and Venice. There could be no hesitation. Its people were Italians, the Empire was Germanic. Venice ruled justly, firmly and wisely with a consistent policy; the Empire was continually falling into chaos and civil war. So in 1420 Cadore gave itself to Venice; and though this brought upon it from time to time invasions from the North, it had no cause to rue its choice. In making its submission to the Queen of the Adriatic it reserved its ancient rights and privileges, and these Venice was wise enough to respect.

Though he was of such ancient lineage, Titian's birthplace was humble enough. It stands to-day, an unpretentious house of wood and stone, two stories in height,

with a small garden attached. Eminence in that poor land brought no wealth. The name of Titian, or Tiziano, was a very common one in the family. Of his mother we only know that her name was Lucia. She bore another son, who was called Francesco, and who attained distinction both as a painter and a soldier. Whether he was older or younger than Titian is disputed. There were also two daughters, Orsola or Orsa, who remained single and for many years presided over the master's household, and Caterina, who married and passed her days among her native mountains.

Life was sweet at Cadore. Every breath of the pure thin air brought health and strength, and sent the blood tingling through the veins. Beauty and sublimity were on every side. We know that Titian loved his mountain home. Each year after he had become established in Venice he would make the long, hard journey back to the scene of his childhood, and in the days of his wealth and power he would lend the community money in times of scarcity, and would support his fellow citizens by his influence with the Venetian government. In nearly all of his pictures there is a wonderful landscape background, where his beloved Dolomites loom sublime in the blue distance.

But if life was sweet there, it was also hard. Only by tireless labor could a subsistence be wrung from the unfertile soil, the steep forests or the gloomy mines. Gregorio was determined that his sons should have an easier lot, and so when Titian was nine or ten years old he took him to an uncle in Venice of whom we only know that his name was Antonio. Francesco was also taken there, but whether at the same time we do not know. Both boys must have manifested a capacity for art, for both were apprenticed as painters.

When Titian came to Venice about the year 1487 the city was at the height of its power and glory. Constanti-

nople had fallen before the Turks, and they were extending their conquests; but Venice still possessed far-flung possessions in the East. Her navy ruled the seas, while her mercantile marine poured into her lap the riches of the Orient. Vasco da Gama had not yet rounded the Cape of Good Hope and discovered the sea-route to the Indies. The silken fabrics and the costly spices of Asia still found their way to Europe by the Venetian quays. A large part of the Italian mainland, embracing much fertile soil and many opulent cities, had been subjected to her sway. She rose from the waters a queen in beauty as in splendor. Her marble palaces, now faded and defaced by time and neglect, were new and brilliant. Upon her watery streets and her picturesque squares all languages could be heard, and the merchants of every land resorted to her markets to buy and sell. The Golden Book had not yet been closed, and the Venetian nobility had not yet become the narrow oligarchy which it became after 1506.

All this wealth demanded art for its adornment. Venice had been late in its development of a school of painting. With their faces turned to the East, her priests and nobles had preferred the mosaics of Bysantium and the gorgeous fabrics and precious stones of the Orient to adorn their palaces and churches. The native school of painting, devoted chiefly to altar-pieces in many sections fitted into elaborate Gothic frames and with backgrounds of gold, was stiff and archaic. At length, the Bellini arose, and for the first time Venice had a pictorial art worthy of her greatness, though the Vivarini continued to be active rivals painting in the old style. Gentile Bellini was a strong man, excelling in portraiture, perspective and the handling of complex compositions — an eminent historical painter, vigorous, truthful, but lacking in charm. His brother Giovanni was a genius, whose works are characterized by

exceeding grace and sweetness, by richness of color and nobility of sentiment, with landscapes of striking beauty — one of the world's great painters.

Probably Gregorio did not know much about painting himself. When he brought the boy Titian to Venice he placed him with Sebastiano Zuccato, whom we know only as a distinguished mosaicist. Zuccato had two sons who followed his calling, and who in the years to come remained the devoted friends of Titian. Probably Sebastiano practised painting too in a modest way. Perhaps Gregorio had no higher ambition for his boy than to make of him a worker in mosaics, which was, indeed, a profitable profession at Venice. We do not know how long Titian stayed with Zuccato. We only know that he passed from his workshop to the studio of Gentile Bellini, an excellent place to learn firmness and precision of drawing and the secrets of perspective. Nor do we know how long he stayed with Gentile. We merely know that he went from him to the abler teaching of his brother Giovanni, who was then the foremost artist of Venice, and one of the leaders in the art movement of the world.

When Titian came to Venice the old method of painting in tempera, which has given us so many strangely enduring masterpieces, had fallen into disuse. Antonello da Messina had brought from Flanders the new system of painting in oil. Its superior facility and greater brilliancy had commended it to the Venetian masters. The dampness of the lagoons was fatal to fresco, and so oil painting was the established style at Venice, and in its mysteries the boy was instructed from the beginning.

Giovanni Bellini was not merely a great painter — he was the prolific maker of masters. To his studio there flocked all the young men of conspicuous talent from Venice and the neighboring mainland. He was a just and worthy

man, respected by the government and beloved by his scholars. In his studio Titian met the best in art that Venice could offer.

It is customary to contrast the art of Venice with that of Florence, assuming that the latter was built upon the study of antique models, the former from a direct observation of nature. Nothing could be further from the truth. The father of the Bellini had learned his art in Florence. The sons were brought up in Padua, where Squarcione had his famous school, at which the pupils were taught to draw entirely from antique statues. Mantegna, who was the most successful of all Renaissance painters in reviving the art of Rome, was married to their sister. They were themselves passionate collectors of ancient marbles. In many of Titian's early pictures as in those of most of the Bellini's other pupils, we find beautiful bas-reliefs copied from the antique. Indeed, the art of Venice, with its worship of beauty, its serenity, its sanity and health, comes much closer to the true spirit of Greece than does that of Florence. It may be sensuous; but its sensuousness is sane and wholesome, closely akin to that of Skopas and Praxiteles, though with a more voluptuous charm.

What pictures Titian painted under Giovanni's influence we do not know. Works of his youth may survive, going by the name of his master or some of his fellow-pupils; but they remain unidentified. We have nothing of the days of his immaturity, as with Raphael. Titian first bursts upon us a consummate master.

But if we can trace in Titian little influence of the Bellinis, there was in Giovanni's workshop a young man of about his own age who was destined to have a great influence upon his development, Giorgione of Castelfranco.

Giorgio Barbarelli, called Giorgione (Big George), is one of the greatest names in the history of art. He was one of those original geniuses who open out a new path that

other men will follow. He was the most luscious of painters. Beauty of a sweetly sensuous kind is the goddess of his idolatry — beauty that exists for its own sweet sake in an afternoon of summer that endures forever, where the harshest sound is the music of a shepherd's pipe, and the world is full of the languor of love's sweet satiety. It is the enchanted land of *Daphnis and Chloe,* the region of sweet pagan sensuousness where Keats lived and died. He who would understand the soul of Giorgione's art should read the *Ode to a Grecian Urn,* where all its soft voluptuous languor is imprisoned forever.

Giorgione and Titian were friends, and the first work of Titian's of which we have an authentic record is their joint labor on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. This was the great inn and exchange where the merchants of all northern lands, called generally Tedeschi or Germans, lodged and sold their wares. It was the property of the State. In 1505 it was burned down, and the government at once proceeded to rebuild it on a larger and more splendid scale. It was finished in 1507, and Giorgione, Titian and Morto da Feltre were employed to fresco its outer walls. It seems incredible that an intelligent government should have adopted such a method of decoration in a city whose dampness made fresco impracticable even on the inside; but so it was. Giorgione and Titian put upon this work, destined so soon to perish, some of their choicest labor. We know that the pictures were very beautiful and that they were hard to understand. The Venetians were all poor in allegory; or rather, their allegories were generally incomprehensible, but supremely beautiful. And so it was here. Vasari, accustomed to the clear-cut allegorical painting of Florence, could make nothing of them.

The contract was let to Giorgione, who took Titian as his assistant; and it is said that he quarreled with the latter because his work was the more admired. The story of the

quarrel is most probably a mere invention. They must have been friends when Giorgione died in 1511; for Titian completed the unfinished pictures in Giorgione's studio; amongst others, adding to the glorious *Sleeping Venus* at Dresden its landscape background and a Cupid that has since been painted out.

These perished frescoes were, as we have said, Titian's first authenticated productions. Yet we have other pictures that in all likelihood were produced at an earlier date. It seems certain that the *Jacopo Pesaro doing homage to St. Peter* at Antwerp was painted before August 18, 1503, when Alexander VI died. That pontiff of evil memory is shown presenting Pesaro to the Saint; and the Borgia's crimes had aroused such detestation throughout the world that it is most unlikely that anyone would put himself under his patronage after his death. If the picture was painted before that time it is a conclusive answer to Mr. Cook's contention that Titian was born in 1489 or 1490; for it is the work of an accomplished master, not of a boy of thirteen or fourteen. It shows the influence of Giorgione rather than of Bellini, and the landscape with its view of sea and shore is masterly.

In the Scuola di San Rocco at Venice there is a *Man of Sorrows* that is claimed to be Titian's earliest picture. It is a poor thing, and there is no reason to believe that it is by his hand.

Titian did take from Giovanni Bellini the preference for presenting his Madonnas and Saints half length, which is so conspicuous in his early works. Of these the *Gipsy Madonna* of Vienna is believed to be one of the first. It is a thing of exquisite beauty, with a delightful landscape, and is painted in the style of Giorgione. There were also a number of other Madonnas painted under the same influence, such as the *Madonna with St. Anthony* in the Uffizi, the *Madonna with St. Ulphus,* at Madrid, and the

Madonna with the Cherries at Vienna; though in the latter Titian is already developing his own style and type.

In these pictures the young master fixes the type of the Madonna to which he is to adhere to the end — a woman in the full development of a rich and voluptuous beauty, sane and wholesome, with nothing of the ascetic or the devotee, a beautiful human mother rejoicing in her motherhood. The models are often changed, her loveliness is infinitely varied, but the essential type remains unaltered to the end. Many regret the absence of the divine element that shines forth in the Madonnas of Raphael; but art would be infinitely poorer were we robbed of these glorious incarnations of the beauty of woman as she is.

The Infant Christ is likewise always of the same type, the worthy child of such a mother, as healthy as he is beautiful, with none of the haunting power of him who looks out at us from the arms of the *Sistine Madonna,* but unsurpassable as a presentation of human childhood. Titian was a lover of children as he was of woman, and he was content to accept both as God had made them, deeming that their natural beauty was worthy of the Divinity.

There was in the studio of Giovanni Bellini another young man of about Titian's age who had a marked influence upon his artistic development,— Palma Vecchio. Palma is one of the sweetest of all painters. His specialty is the *Sacra Conversazione,* the Madonna and saints seated in a smiling landscape. His women are supremely beautiful, full, voluptuous and sweet, of the type of his Violante, living in a land where it is forever June, where the grass is forever green, the trees forever in verdure, the flowers forever blooming, and where the birds sing forever to their listening mates. At first the stronger personality of the young Giorgione, who held among the pupils of Bellini

the same position that Rossetti held among the Pre-Raphaelites, maintained the ascendancy; but there was a period after his death when the influence of Palma was very strong in Titian's work.

There are few things more difficult than to fix the order of Titian's pictures. Documents enable us to establish an occasional landmark on his triumphal progress; and from these the critics try to fill in the dates of the others by considerations of style. This is, of course, fallacious. An artist does not move forward continuously. Now he makes an experiment in a new method, then he returns to his former manner as easier or more appropriate to the work in hand. He moves like the tides, in waves that alternately advance and recede. And in Titian's case the problem becomes more difficult because of the great length of time that pictures often remained in his studio, sometimes because he was not content with them, more frequently because he was forced to put them aside for more urgent commissions. So, we shall not attempt, as various critics do, to assign a precise date to the pictures where no documents are at hand. One can in such cases do little more than say that a work is in his early or his later style. The pictures that he produced in his long life were so numerous that though scarcely a third of them survive only the greatest can be mentioned. Unhapily, numbers of them were carried to Spain, that grave of masterpieces, where most of them perished by conflagration or neglect.

Titian was a mighty painter both of men and women. But there is an essential difference in his painting of the sexes. For good or evil the characters of his men are in their faces, though he has a tendency perhaps to lend them something of his own dignity and self-restraint. In painting women their beauty is all that he seeks. In face and form they are radiantly beautiful, always wholesome and richly developed; but their countenances have usually the

impassive serenity of a Greek goddess. He is the painter of man's soul and of woman's body.

In the old days it was the fashion to place the Madonna in the center of the picture with saints on either hand. Bellini always does this. Titian speedily abandoned that stiff conception. He placed the Madonna at one side, and thus acquired great freedom of composition, resulting in the most delightful groupings, such as in the *Pesaro Madonna* or the *Holy Family* at Dresden.

Some of Titian's greatest works were painted in these early days under the magic spell of Giorgione's influence. The *Concert* in the Pitti is so like Giorgione that until Morelli's day it was attributed to that master. There are but three men, shown at half length; in the center a man past the flush of youth playing the harpsichord, to the left a very young man who looks on with youth's self-absorption, to the right an old man intently listening with something of the callousness of age. The glory of the picture is in the face of the man who plays, the most magnificent exemplification of the transfiguring power of music to be found in all the range of art. It is supposed to have been painted about 1510.

Then there is the *Baptism of Christ* in the Capitol, painted for Giovanni Ram about the same time, where the Jordan flows through a beautiful verdant landscape, and St. John looks like a young Bacchus; and the *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen* in the National Gallery, with its magnificent, far-reaching prospect.

The *Three Ages of Man* in the Bridgewater Gallery is the most Giorgionesque of all his works. In the foreground a beautiful maiden pipes to a nude youth upon whose knee she rests; a little farther off two babes sleep while a Cupid plays about them; in the distance an old man contemplates a skull; while the low-lying land stretches away to the distant horizon.

It was in these early days, probably about 1512, that Titian painted for some unknown person what is perhaps the most beautiful picture in all the world unless it be the *Sleeping Venus* at Dresden, the picture in the Borghese at Rome that men call the *Sacred and Profane Love.* In an enchanted landscape upon the marble rim of a fountain sit two women of surpassing loveliness, one richly clothed, who looks pensively into the distance, the other nude, with glance turned to her companion, while between them a Cupid plays in the water. Like most Venetian allegories, it is hard to understand. Some think it is an illustration of the *Pervigilium Veneris,* some that it represents *Artless and Sated Love,* some a scene in the Forest of Ardennes taken from Ariosto; but the most plausible solution seems to be that offered by Prof. Wykoff that it is *Venus persuading Medea to fly with Jason,* or, as has been suggested later, *Venus persuading Helen to fly with Paris.* But it matters little what it means. The fact remains that earth has seen nothing more beautiful, perhaps nothing that is so fair. The Venus is the most perfect type of the golden blonde that was ever painted, just as Giorgione's masterpiece is the most perfect of all of darker type; and he who has not seen the picture can have no conception of its marvelous execution, of how the light caresses the exquisite blonde flesh and lingers upon the lovely face. It is pure in form as a statue of Praxiteles, but palpitating with a vital glow that only a Venetian brush can give. The picture is finished to an ultimate perfection, every detail, from the bas-relief upon the fountain's rim to each flower that decks the grass, being rendered with loving care. The landscape is far-reaching and richly varied. In every aspect it is an unsurpassable achievement. In this picture and in the *Venus* of Giorgione the great pagan revival, the renewed joy in the beauty of earth and of woman which was the chief gift of Venice to the world, finds its best expression. It carries us back to the golden

days of Greece, when the gods wooed the daughters of men, when the fairest of goddesses accepted the caresses of a mortal lover. The passionate love of beauty for its own sake, the gladness of the sunlight, the bliss of simple existence in a world where all is fair, where the sense of sin is unknown and sorrow is afar off, are here depicted with a mastery never known before or since. This and Giorgione's picture, painted, no doubt, about the same time, mark the golden moment of the pagan revival, when the joy of life was strong in the youthful masters, and sickness and grief had not yet come with their saddening touch.

In 1508 hard times set in for the Venetian artists. In an evil hour for the Republic Julius II formed the League of Cambrai, uniting all Europe for her destruction. From all sides her territories were invaded, and the shameful spectacle was presented of the head of the Christian Church leading a crusade for the overthrow of Christendom's chief bulwark against the Ottomite advance. Engaged in a death struggle for her very existence, Venice had neither time nor money to expend upon the arts. So her painters scattered, seeking employment in the mainland cities. Titian went to Padua, we do not know exactly when; but in 1511 we find him there, frescoing in the Scuola del Carmine and the Scuola del Santo in company with Domenico Campagnola. The frescoes still remain to speak for themselves. They have been much admired; but we confess our inability to share the admiration. Titian had had no training in fresco save such as he acquired on the walls of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi. It does not admit of the elaborate finish and repeated glazings that constitute the charm of his works at this time. The subjects, too, were unsuited to his brush. We feel that if these frescoes had perished, like those of the Fondaco, his fame would not have been less. Perhaps they suffer, too, from his haste to get back to Venice, as

the League was breaking up and brighter days were dawning.

On his return Titian found himself the foremost of Venetian painters. Giorgione had just died, and Bellini was very old. Bembo, who was then in Venice, greatly admired his works, and when he went back to Rome he persuaded Leo X, whose ambition it was to gather about him all the artistic and literary genius of Italy, to send for the master. The offer was a tempting one. Rome was then the world's center, as it had not been since the days of Constantine, and as it was never to be again. In the papal chair there sat the most generous of all patrons of the arts. Yet Titian was loath to go. He loved Venice and he loved yet more his mountain home, which was not too far away for an annual visit. But he felt that if he were to renounce the splendid opportunity held out to him, the city should do something in return.

At that time the Venetian government had an easy way of pensioning its artists at the expense of others. No foreigner could trade in the city save through a native broker. A broker's patent was therefore a lucrative thing, and as the duties of the office could be discharged through subordinates or substitutes, it was a simple way of attaching artists to the service of the state.

So, on May 31, 1513, Titian addressed to the government a petition, advising it of his call to Rome, and asking that he be accorded the first broker's patent that should fall vacant, with pay for two assistants; offering in exchange to paint the great battle picture for the Hall of Grand Council in the Doge's Palace. Fearful of losing him, the government granted his request, and he set to work with his two assistants on the promised picture.

This raised a storm of protest. Various other artists had promises of brokerships, and if Titian was to receive the first that fell vacant, they must wait. They brought

such pressure to bear that on March 20, 1514, the Council of Ten revoked the decree in Titian's favor, and ceased to pay his assistants. Work on the battle-piece was naturally discontinued.

But they little reckoned with the resolution and persistence of the master. On November 28, 1514, he asked for the reversion of the broker's patent held by Giovanni Bellini, and which must soon fall vacant owing to Bellini's great age. This was worth 100 ducats per annum, and with it there went an exemption from taxes worth from 20 to 25 ducats. It carried with it the obligation to paint the official portrait of each succeeding doge for the nominal price of eight ducats. Titian did not stop here. The painters working in the Hall of Grand Council, who had formed the cabal against him, had shamefully abused their opportunities. So he stirred up an investigation. The commission appointed, headed by Francesco Valier, made a scathing report, showing that as much as 700 ducats had been paid for pictures that had scarcely been begun. All the painters working in the hall were ignominiously dismissed. Then Titian on January 18, 1516, offered to do the great battle-piece for 400 ducats. His offer was accepted; but the price was reduced to 300 ducats.

One would think that after this signal triumph Titian would have set vigorously to work upon the picture, to put his enemies to shame and to secure the favor of the government, which had in its power so many lucrative commissions. Quite the contrary. Despite repeated remonstrances from the Council, he did nothing. At last on August 11, 1522, the Council advised him that his patent would be taken away if he did not finish the picture. Then, to save his patent, he completed a picture of *Frederick Barbarossa kissing the Foot of the Pope in the Presence of the Doge and Council,* which Giovanni Bellini had begun. It was only in 1537, twenty-one years after the work had been un-

dertaken, and when his broker's patent had been taken away, and repayment had been demanded of the 1800 ducats that he had received, that he finally finished the work, and so secured a restoration of the patent and a remission of the demand.

A strange fatality pursued the four great battle-pieces of the Renaissance. Leonardo's *Battle of the Standard* was only begun upon the wall and Michelangelo's *Battle of Pisa* was not even begun. The great cartoons, which were the admiration of the world, have perished utterly. Raphael died when he had made the drawing for his *Battle of Constantine,* and the work was carried out by his pupils. Titian's picture was destroyed by the fire that consumed the Hall of Grand Council in 1577, a year after his death. We know it only by drawings, a poor copy in oil of a part, and by a print. It was esteemed a masterpiece, and we can believe it. The subject was one to arouse him to the exercise of his highest powers — the victory of his fellow countrymen of Cadore over their ancient enemies, the Imperialists, amid the scenes of his birth. The mountain landscape, with the raging storm that so well accords with the fury of the combatants, must have been surpassingly fine.

II

THE PAINTER OF PRINCES

About the year 1516 Titian became connected with the first of his long line of princely patrons, Alfonso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara. He was an eminent soldier, who excelled in the casting and handling of cannon, so that his artillery was the best in Europe. Sorely against his will he had married Lucretia Borgia, as the only means of saving his small principality from the rapacity of her brother

Cæsar and her father Alexander VI. She came to him as "a somewhat battered bride," but to his surprise she proved a faithful wife, an intelligent patroness of art and letters and a wise regent of the State during his frequent absences in the field. He soon learned to respect her and perhaps to love her. Though he was fond of art, Alfonso's manners were rough. He expected to command painters as he would soldiers, and when they failed to fill his commissions, he indulged in threats and abuse. The extensive correspondence with his agents at Rome in the vain attempt to get a picture from Raphael is amusing in the violence of his demands and the smiling excuses of the busy artist. With Titian he was at first almost equally peremptory, but more successful. Some of the master's greatest works were painted for the adornment of his grim Castello.

Among these was the *Tribute Money* at Dresden. This is the greatest picture of Christ that was ever painted. The nobility of the face has never been equaled. Its expression of gentle rebuke as he answers the cunning Pharisee is incomparable. No other picture of Titian's is finished with such care. Albert Dürer was then at Venice, and it is said that Titian painted the *Tribute Money* to show that a minuteness of detail equal to Dürer's could be combined with a breadth of general effect such as was beyond the reach of the great German.

Titian painted several portraits of Alfonso, one of which is now in the Prado; but there is no record of his having painted Lucretia. Six months after her death in 1519, Alfonso became attached to Laura Dianti, the beautiful daughter of a citizen of Ferrara, and it is believed that he married her. Certainly she was treated as a duchess. She was as lovely in character as she was beautiful, and her influence on Alfonso was all for good. She softened the asperity of his manners. After his union with her his letters to Titian and to others acquire a different tone. He loved

her till he died, and for her sake he gave up his passion for war, which would have taken him from her side, and devoted himself to the arts of peace. It is believed that we have a portrait of her in the picture of the radiantly beautiful woman in the Louvre to whom a man holds a mirror, which used to be called *Titian and his Mistress.*

It is difficult to fix the dates of the numerous works that Titian painted for Alfonso; but it is thought that the *Homage to Venus* in the Prado was the first. It is a radiant picture, illustrating a passage from Philostratus. In the Garden of the Hesperides stands a statue of Venus, to which two lovely nymphs make their offering; but the life of the scene is in the innumerable delightful children who are playing upon the ground or gathering the golden apples from the trees. They are perhaps the most fascinating bambini ever painted, more realistic than those of Correggio, firmer in their flesh than those of Rubens. The picture was one of those adorning the famous Alabaster Chamber in the Castello.

About 1518 Titian painted for Alfonso the exquisite *Bacchanal* now in the Prado. Of all the pictures representing the exhilaration of the wine-cup, this is the most beautiful. All of it is enchanting. It is less passionate, more restrained than the Bacchanalian scenes of Rubens. In all the range of art there is no more perfect figure than that of the nymph who, overcome by wine, lies sleeping in the foreground. On a scroll one reads, " Chi boist et ne reboit ne çais qua boir soit."

But the most glorious of all the pictures painted for Alfonso was the *Bacchus and Ariadne* now in the National Gallery. This was completed early in 1523 to illustrate a poem by Catullus, and is one of the world's richest treasures. The god, in his chariot drawn by panthers, finds the maiden on the shore, and leaps from the car in her pursuit, while behind him are his joyous followers, maddened by his gift.

The young satyr who leads the procession is the most wonderful picture of the archness and playfulness of childhood that was ever painted. This picture completed the decoration of the Alabaster Chamber. Surely when it hung there with the *Bacchanal* and the *Homage to Venus,* all in their fresh splendor, the world contained no lovelier room.

If, as is generally supposed, the charming portrait in the National Gallery be that of *Ariosto,* we owe this, too, to the patronage of Alfonso and the master's frequent visits to Ferrara.

Among the portraits of these early days are some of Titian's greatest masterpieces, such as the *Physician Parma* at Vienna, the *Man with the Glove* and the *Man in Black* in the Louvre and the *Young Englishman* in the Pitti. They are all characterized by great dignity and reticence and by the care bestowed upon the hands. They are the models on which Van Dyck formed his style. These marvelous portraits justify the eulogy that Aretino penned of the likeness that the master made of Gonzalo Perez, "Titian, in painting you, will annihilate the claims that death has upon your person."

Meantime, about 1515, Titian painted for some unknown patron the glorious *Holy Family* of Dresden, one of the most magnificent and perhaps the best preserved of all his works — the one which perhaps gives us the best idea of the surpassing splendor of his color when in its pristine freshness. It is hard to say whether one should prefer the richly developed beauty of the Madonna or the more delicate loveliness of the Magdalen. Yet, beautiful as is this work, it hardly surpasses the *Madonna with St. Catherine* in the National Gallery, with its far-reaching view up the valley, stretching away to the distant mountains, one of the finest landscapes ever painted even by Titian, and the greatest of his pictures painted in the style of Palma Vecchio.

The perfection of this landscape leads us to speak of

Titian's achievements in that line. He is justly called the father of modern landscape. Reared amid mountains which are among the most beautiful in the world, he was a passionate lover of nature. And few have had such opportunities to study her charms. In his annual visits to Cadore he witnessed the whole of her glorious pageant from the exquisite tones of the Adriatic, the low lying marshes of the shore, the fertile plains gradually giving place to verdant foothills, and so to the mighty Dolomites with their riven peaks, their solemn forests and their waters, now rushing in foaming torrents, now spread out in bottomless lakes reflecting the mountains and the sky. He witnessed every delightful or sublime aspect of nature, and he transferred them all to the canvas with equal skill. But much as he loved the mountains, he realized that close at hand they cut off the view, and that their finest effect in a picture is upon the distant horizon, where they lend a majesty to the scene. And so, in a majority of his compositions his native peaks are shown far away, while between them and the spectator there stretches a region of varied loveliness.

As a colorist the world has justly yielded to Titian the foremost place. Others of the Venetians rival him in particular qualities; Bellini is at times sweeter, Giorgione more luscious, Tintoretto more startling, Paul Veronese more original, Lorenzo Lotto more subtle, Bonifaccio brighter; but in his mastery of the whole field of color, in his unerring sense of harmony between the subject and the tones to be used in its presentation, the master is supreme. Only Rubens, the giant of the North, can stand beside him; and most persons prefer the rich, glowing tones of the great Venetian to the brilliant splendor of the mighty Fleming.

It was probably in 1515 that he painted the marvelous *Flora* of the Uffizi, a presentment of woman in the full bloom of the beauty that has never been surpassed, perhaps never equaled. She is faultless as a statue by Praxiteles,

but with a rich luxuriance of charms alien to Greek conceptions. She seems to have been painted from the same model as the *Laura Dianti* of the Louvre.

About the same time was painted the lovely *Venus Anodyomena* of the Bridgewater Gallery, where we see Venus rising from the sea, wringing the water from her abundant hair.

While the master was painting these pictures, which are the most glorious apotheosis that we have of the pagan spirit, where the soul of Greece wakes again after the sleep of ages, more voluptuous and perhaps more beautiful than before, he was also producing the greatest of his religious works, the greatest of all religious pictures save the *Last Supper* and the *Sistine Madonna* — his magnificent *Assumption of the Virgin* in the Academy at Venice. There will forever live in the human breast the spirit of that Athenian who was tired of hearing Aristides called "the Just"; and so there is no want of up-to-date critics who like to gird at this glorious work. But they will pass away, while it will endure, let us hope, forever. From her empty tomb the Virgin rises, a middle aged woman in the grand maturity of her ripe development. Beneath, the Apostles look up overwhelmed with wonder, while above, in the blinding light of heaven, God the Father descends to meet her. Around her are countless angels of surpassing loveliness, conspicuous among whom the three young girls upon the right are perhaps the most beautiful girl faces that were ever painted. Fortunately it has been removed from the dim light of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, over whose high altar it was hung on March 20, 1518, and transferred to the Academy, where it can be seen in the full light of day. Of this picture Taine says: "Venetian art centers in this work, and perhaps reaches its climax," while Lafenestre says: "Never as yet had the genius of Venice, healthy, abounding, free, joyous, found such full vent."

When we consider the majesty of the Virgin, the power of the Disciples, the beauty of the encircling angels, the glory of light and color, the perfect unity of the composition, it is apparent that we stand in the presence of one of the world's supreme masterpieces. Nearly all the great masters attempted this subject; but Titian's presentation maintains the same supremacy as Leonardo's in the field of the *Last Supper.* When we think of the Madonna ascending into heaven, it is this scene that ever unfolds itself before the mind's eye.

Some say that the Apostles are too agitated; but surely if agitation were ever excusable it would be when one loved to adoration was lifted from their midst and borne aloft amid the chanting of the angelic choir. It is said, too, that the Virgin is too mature. She must at this time have been past forty, and it would have been as inartistic as untrue to have a slender girlish figure as the center of this vast and powerful composition. Of course, like all things human, the picture is not perfect; but there are few that approach closer to perfection.

The next year saw the completion of the *Annunciation* at Treviso, a splendid work strangely disfigured by the introduction of the donor, Malchiostro, canon of the Cathedral, who, looking like a grotesque old woman, peeps ludicrously from behind a corner at the wonderful event.

In 1519 Jacopo Pesaro, bishop of Paphos, whence he was called "Baffo," the man who had given Titian when a rising young painter the commission for the picture at Antwerp, again employed him, this time to paint a majestic altarpiece where all the family of the Pesaros should be depicted doing homage to the enthroned Madonna. The result was one of Titian's great masterpieces. Seated upon the steps of a lofty temple, the Virgin looks down at the worthy bishop, now a man of middle age, while opposite him kneel

the members of his house. It was a picture that had an immense influence on later Italian art, introducing the stately architectural style in which Paul Veronese was to excel, though with a lofty seriousness that Veronese never equaled. Like most of the pictures in Venetian churches, it is dirty and ill kept, so that much of its glory has departed, at least until it shall be cleaned and varnished; but still it is one of the noblest of religious pictures. We say religious, not devotional. Titian was never a devotional painter, like Perugino, for example. His sacred pictures are not to be taken into one's oratory as an aid to devout thoughts. They are intended as ornaments of grand religious functions conducted with solemn magnificence as a part of the exercises of government. Considered in that light, they serve their purpose admirably, and none of them better than the *Pesaro Madonna.* It is a marvel of composition. She sits enthroned on the right side; but every line leads the eye to her.

In this year of 1519 Titian went to Mantua with Dosso Dossi to see its famous treasures of art; but he was not presented at court.

In 1520 we find Titian involved in the only really discreditable transaction that we can lay up against him. He had contracted to paint a great altar-piece, still in the church of SS. Nazaro e Celso at Brescia, in five sections. One of these represented a St. Sebastian, a powerful figure sinking in the agony of death, but held up by the cord about his right arm. The description of this by Alfonso's agent so inflamed the cupidity of the Duke that he demanded that Titian sell it to him, and paint a replica for the Brescians. At first Titian refused, but finally yielded, whether through fear of offending so powerful a patron or tempted by the extra 60 ducats that he offered, we cannot say. Fortunately Alfonso finally dared not incur the enmity of the Cardinal

Legate, who had ordered the picture, and renounced his claims, so that nothing came of the matter save a stain on the fair fame of both.

In 1523 another princely patron was added to the master's list. Alfonso introduced him in most flattering terms to his nephew Federigo Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua. The son of Isabella d'Este, the Marquis had been brought up among beautiful things, and had inherited from his accomplished mother a taste for the arts. For him Titian painted the *Entombment* of the Louvre, a sad masterpiece of passionate beauty — somewhat gloomy and somber, as became the mournful event, but rich in its deep coloring, united in its composition and full of sympathy; less academic and more moving that Raphael's version of the same theme in the Borghese.

At this time Titian was living in an irregular union with a woman of whom we know nothing except that her name was Cecilia and that she was the daughter of a barber of Cadore. She bore him two sons, Pomponio, who was to be the plague of his life, and Orazio, the comfort of his declining years. In 1525 she was taken seriously ill. Fearing that she might die and leave upon their children the stigma of illegitimacy, Titian married her. Afterward she bore him a daughter named Lavinia, who was the joy of his heart. Cecilia died in 1530, and was buried on August 5 of that year, to the master's sincere sorrow. No doubt she was a good woman, for a strong and a just man loved her. When she had passed away, Titian sent for his sister Orsa, who came and took charge of his household, and brought up his orphaned children.

At this period of his life Titian was often sick. His own letters and those of others frequently speak of attacks of fever. No doubt the malaria of the lagoons had gotten into his blood, and there was then no quinine to cure it.

Eventually his strong constitution cast off the poison, and his later days were healthy.

The year 1527 was an important one for Titian; for in March of that year there came to Venice the strange man who was to be the master's most intimate friend, and to be of infinite service in his dealings with the great of earth. Escaping from Rome, where he was threatened with punishment for his disgraceful *Sonnetti Lussuriosi,* Pietro Aretino, "the Scourge of Princes," found a refuge in Venice. He was a marvelous creature. Of a robust constitution and unbridled sensuality, he was possessed of infinite cunning and unparalleled effrontery. Among all the men who have lived by blackmail and sycophancy he is easily the chief. In some way he possessed himself of the shameful secrets of all the great men of his time, and compelled them to pay him tribute. If they gave him what he asked, he published letters and sonnets in their praise; if not, secure in his Venetian retreat, he poured forth upon them the phials of his wrath, revealing to the world their most secret sins. Of him the bitter epitaph was written:

> "Questo è Pietro Aretino, poeta tosco,
> Che d' ogni un disse male, eccetto che di Dio,
> Scusandosi con dir, non lo conosco."

> "This is Pietro Aretino, the venomous poet,
> Who spoke ill of everyone except of God,
> Excusing himself by saying, 'I do not know Him.'"

On the proceeds of his audacious blackmail he lived like a prince in a palace on the Grand Canal, where he entertained with lavish hospitality; so much so that on one occasion some strangers in the city entered his house and commanded wine, thinking that they were at an inn — an occurrence that afforded him much amusement. The writer of the "Ragionamenti," the most disgustingly indecent

book that was ever printed, he must at all times have been foul-mouthed; but the great of the earth dared not refuse his invitations, and his banquets were attended by hosts of distinguished men. No doubt they were very entertaining. Aretino was a brilliant talker, full of repartee and of amusing, if not always modest, anecdotes; and the festal board was always graced by a number of beautiful women whose easy virtue laid no restraint upon the company. He was also a good judge of art. He had even practised painting in his youth; and a description of a sunset which we find in one of his letters to Titian reveals a feeling for nature and a graphic power rare in the literature of the period.

Titian was at this time a man of fifty, tall, strong, dignified in manner, accustomed to courts and the society of the best. What drew the master to this brigand of the pen we do not know; but shortly after Aretino's arrival in Venice Titian painted his portrait, which Aretino sent as a present to Federigo Gonzaga on June 22, 1527. Soon they became inseparable companions and devoted allies. Aretino, who had the genius of the journalist more highly developed than anyone that ever lived unless it be Voltaire, was known throughout Europe. From one end to the other his letters flew, now dripping venom, now steeped in adulation. When Titian would paint a picture, Aretino would write an epistle or a sonnet in its praise, and all Europe would long to see the work. In the personal letters that he was continually writing to monarchs and great men, he would usually slip in some words in praise of his friend. Titian, on his part, always had a picture on hand when Aretino needed it as a gift to one in authority. False to everyone else, Aretino was true to Titian to the end, though in a few cases his disposition to speak evil overcame him, and he spoke unkindly of his friend. If we wish to know how he looked, we have only to go to the Pitti, where he stands forever limned by Titian's veracious brush; and we

can see the strong man whose gluttony and sensuality were the marvel of his time, and who kept monarchs in terror of his poisoned shafts. Yet he was charitable to the poor to the point of extravagance. His devotion to his two daughters also commands respect.

In the same year as Aretino, Jacopo Sansovino, the great architect, came to Venice, fleeing from the sack of Rome. He was a man almost as dissolute as Aretino. He was admitted into the compact, and the three stood together against the world. They were called "the Triumvirate." In 1529 Sansovino was named architect of St. Mark's, and entered upon the distinguished career that was to give us, among other things, the Library of St. Mark's, one of the world's most perfect buildings, and the loggia of the Campanile, fortunately spared when the Campanile fell. These three were the central figures in many a banquet where amid much brilliant conversation there was no little debauchery. Titian, however, would not follow his friends in their excesses. Aretino says of him: "He courts the girls, makes as if he would kiss them, and plays all sorts of foolish youthful pranks with them, but goes no further."

In 1528 Titian reigned supreme and almost alone in Venice. Palma Vecchio died that year; the Bellini had long been dead; Sebastian del Piombo returned to Rome, and Pordenone forsook Venice for the cities on the mainland, where fresco, his favorite medium, could be practised. Only Bonifaccio remained worthy to be mentioned beside the master.

It was in 1531 that Titian moved into the great house where he died, called for its size the Casa Grande. It was three stories in height. The master finally took out the partitions in the middle story, converting it into one great studio. Exactly where he had lived before that we do not know. After 1514 he had a studio near San Samuele. In the twenties of that century he dwelt in a house belonging

to the Tron family in the Parish of San Polo. Neither can now be identified. When he first moved into the Casa Grande it was only as tenant of the upper story. Gradually he rented more, and finally purchased the whole. It still exists in the Biri Grande, but so cut up and built around that it bears no resemblance to the stately mansion with gardens overlooking the sea where the master dwelt. In those days he could look across the waves to Murano and to the distant Dolomites that he loved so much. Now the vast buildings of the Fondamenta Nuova cut off the view completely.

The great house in the Biri Grande soon became one of the sights of the city. All distinguished visitors were brought to see it and its treasures of art. The master received them with the dignified courtesy of a strong, self-restrained man of the world, accustomed to associate with the great. There was never in him anything of the bohemian, of the gamin of the French studios. To understand him and his position one must think of the great English artists, of Sir Joshua Reynolds or Lord Leighton. Here the master dispensed a generous hospitality. He loved to have his friends about him in his garden by the sea. He entertained them sumptuously. Of one such occasion we have an account in a letter of Priscianese, the eminent Latinist. He writes: "On the 1st of August I was invited to a feast . . . in a charming garden belonging to Messer Tiziano, the well-known excellent painter. As like desires like, some of the most remarkable men of the city were present, namely Pietro Aretino, . . . Jacopo Tatti called il Sansovino, Jacopo Nardi, and myself, the fourth in this illustrious circle. The heat of the sun was still great, although the place itself is shady; so we spent the time, before the tables were carried out, in looking at those life-like pictures that fill the house, and we en-

joyed the beauty and charm of the garden, which lies on the sea-shore at the extreme end of Venice. From it one can see the pretty island of Murano and other places. Hardly had the sun gone down when the water swarmed with innumerable gondolas, full of beautiful women. Song and music floated towards us and accompanied our cheerful supper until midnight. The garden, which is beautifully laid out and greatly admired, reminded me of Santa Agata. . . . The supper was very good, rich in the most delicate viands and costly wines, and seasoned by the pleasures which the time of the year, the guests, and the feast brought with them. We had just arrived at the fruits when your letters came . . . and when the praise of the Latin tongue was sung, at the expense of the Italian, Aretino became exceedingly angry, and could hardly be prevented from inditing one of the most cruel invectives in the world. He called for paper and ink, although he had already expressed himself strongly in words. After this the supper came most gaily to an end."

Titian has often been accused of avarice. The accusation, though not unfounded, has been much exaggerated. Like most men coming from the mountains, where life is hard and the means of subsistence difficult to obtain,— witness the Scotch and the Swiss — he was fond of money. He knew its value. He also knew the worth of his pictures. Many of them he gave away with a generosity that now seems prodigal; but when he sold them he demanded their value, and was keen in enforcing payment. He was also a good business man, investing his earnings in landed properties that gave him an independent income. But a man so generous to his friends, who lived in a style so princely and entertained visitors so often and in such splendid fashion cannot properly be called avaricious. The way in which the worthless Pomponio was allowed to squander

his father's earnings, as revealed in Aretino's letters of admonition, shows that in his family Titian was only too liberal.

The impression of avarice is largely due to the fact that only his business letters have survived, and these are mostly devoted to an effort to extract from Charles V and Philip II and their ministers the vast sums that they owed him, and which were never paid. It is unfortunate that his private correspondence has perished. Most likely it was not very interesting — the letters of strong, self-contained men rarely are; but it must have thrown some light upon the man and his surroundings.

In 1528 the master undertook to paint the *Death of St. Peter Martyr* for the church of Santi Pietro e Paolo. The next year brought Michelangelo to Venice, fleeing from the wrath of the Medici. The greatest of draughtsmen no doubt influenced the work, which was the only picture ever painted that carried out Tintoretto's maxim, *Il disegno di Michelangelo ed il colorito di Tiziano.* The figure of the murderer is worthy of the great Florentine, and the landscape with its immense trees tortured by the wind and the distant mountains is the grandest ever painted. Unhappily, this picture, which Titian's contemporaries esteemed his masterpiece, perished by fire on August 16, 1867, and we know it only by unworthy copies and the enthusiasm of those who saw it.

As if to show the versatility of his powers, the master painted in 1530 the *Madonna of the Rabbit* and the *Virgin's Rest in Egypt* in the Louvre and the *Madonna with St. Catherine* in the National Gallery, pictures of the Madonna seated in a smiling landscape after the style of Palma Vecchio, works of an idyllic and entrancing sweetness.

As if still further to show his varied talents he painted about the same time the *St. Jerome* of the Louvre, with the deep shadows of its sylvan solitudes.

Some place the *Magdalen* of the Pitti at about this time, others at a much later date. It is a splendid picture, but hardly suited to purposes of devotion. The flowing locks emphasize rather than conceal the opulent treasures of her beautiful bosom. It is the first of a long series of Magdalens painted to extol the allurements of the lovely sinner rather than to display her repentance.

In October, 1529, Charles V and Pope Clement VII met at Bologna. The Emperor was crowned by the Pontiff, and Italy was pacified into that slavery which was to endure for more than three centuries. Vasari says that Titian went to Bologna at the time and painted the imperial portrait; but his letters prove that he remained in Venice, and that Vasari is mistaken.

The real date of the master's first connection with the Emperor was 1533. Charles came to Italy in the fall of 1532, and seeing at Mantua the portrait of Federigo Gonzaga by Titian, he was so pleased that he asked the painter to come and make a likeness of him. Titian went in January, 1533, to Bologna, where Charles then was, and painted two portraits, one in armor, which has perished, the other in court dress with a large Spanish hound. This is at Madrid, and is one of the marvels of art. The master has extenuated nothing. The insignificant figure, the homely face, disfigured by the projecting lower jaw, are there; yet none can look at the picture without perceiving that he is in the presence of a ruler of men. No wonder that Charles gave him a thousand ducats for it, and declared that no one else should ever paint his portrait. He said that he knew that he was ugly, but other artists made him uglier than he was, so that strangers coming into his presence were surprised to find him less homely than they thought; but that Titian told the truth.

At this time the Emperor was a young man of thirty-two, gracious and pleasing in his manners. He overwhelmed

Titian with courtesies and compliments. It is said that while painting one of the portraits the master let fall his brush, and that Charles picked it up, saying, "A Titian is worthy to be served by an emperor"; that when Titian had mounted a table to examine a picture on the wall and was still not high enough to see it well, the Emperor with the aid of the lords standing around raised the table so that the master might see; and that when they parted the monarch publicly embraced the painter. Certain it is that on his arrival at Barcelona on May 10, 1533, Charles issued a patent, making Titian a count of the Lateran Palace, of the Aulic Council and of the Consistory, with the title of Count Palatine, and with authority to appoint notaries and inferior judges, and to legitimize children under the rank of baron. His children were also made nobles, while the master was made a Knight of the Golden Spur with right of entry at court. To his courtiers, who remonstrated against his conferring such dignities upon a mere painter, Charles replied, "We can create many counts, but God only can make a Titian."

Amongst Charles' courtiers was the Marquis Davalos, a distinguished soldier. He had a very beautiful wife, whom he loved much, and he got Titian to paint for him about this time the *Allegory* in Louvre, showing himself attended by Love, Hymen and Victory, with his hand upon his wife's beautiful bosom. As might be expected, with such a model the master surpassed himself.

While at Bologna in 1533, Titian also painted the portrait of Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici. In high favor with the Emperor, he had gone to Austria to command the Italian contingent in the war against the Turks. He proved as poor a soldier as a churchman. His troops mutinied, and he was thrown into prison. Afterwards he was released, and he succeeded again in ingratiating himself into the

imperial favor. He had himself painted in the splendid costume of a Hungarian noble, in memory of his not very distinguished military service. But if the sitter was neither virtuous nor successful in war, he was fine looking, and his portrait is a great masterpiece. As we gaze upon the handsome young lord we remember his miserable death two years later at Itri, when by order of Alessandro de' Medici, the brutal mulatto who tyrannized over Florence, believed to be the son of Clement VII and of a negress in the Medici kitchens, he was poisoned as he was on his way to join the Emperor in his expedition against Tunis.

In 1534 Titian painted the portrait of Isabella d'Este. The beautiful Marchioness, the uncrowned queen of the Renaissance, was growing old, and wisely she did not wish to be transmitted to posterity in her decline. So she gave to the master an early portrait by Francia, from which he made the picture that now adorns the gallery at Vienna. It is a lovely thing, but, as is natural under the circumstances, it has no marked character.

And while it was not painted until three or four years later, we may here mention his portrait of *Francis I.* As one sees the debonair monarch in the Louvre, one would think that it was taken from the life. The whole character of the brave, chivalrous, amorous, pleasure-loving king is in that face, so that it has become the accepted likeness of which one thinks when his name is mentioned. Yet it was painted from a medal. If we may judge from the portraits made by French artists, the master flattered his royal patron.

Between 1534 and 1538 Titian painted one of his greatest works, the *Presentation of the Virgin* in the Venice Academy. Almost everything that can go to make up a great picture is here, pleasing architecture, a grand landscape, beautiful women, noble men, the grace of childhood, even the fierce realism of the terrible old marketwoman who sits

looking on like one of the Fates; but perhaps the greatest charm of the picture is its sense of atmosphere. It inspired many a work by Paul Veronese and his school, but none ever approached its high perfection.

We do not know when the superb *Supper at Emmaus* in the Louvre was painted; somewhere in this period of the master's career. It has not the poignant power of Rembrandt's wonderful creation. The face of Christ does not show his passage through the grave. But save for Rembrandt's matchless work it is the supreme presentation of a theme that painters have essayed so often. The nobility of the Saviour's face, the reverence of one disciple, the astonishment of the other, the mundane incomprehension of the host, could not be better rendered; and the landscape with the distant mountain is a masterpiece in itself.

On Sept. 25, 1534, Clement VII died, and was succeeded by Paul III, Farnese, whom Titian was to immortalize with his brush. On October 31 of the same year the master lost a munificent patron by the death of Alfonso d'Este. His successor, Ercole II, preferred the works of Pordenone; though some contend that Titian's portrait of Alfonso that we have mentioned is really the son.

About this time or a little earlier the master acquired one of the most generous of his patrons. The nephew of Julius II, Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino, had inherited the passionate and violent character of his race. At the age of seventeen he murdered his sister's lover, and at thirty he publicly slew Cardinal Alidosi, the legate and favorite minister of the Pope. Still, he had many good qualities. He was a bold, active and able soldier and a great patron of the arts. He came to Venice in 1533 to take command in the war against the Turks, and Titian painted the splendid portraits of him and the Duchess Eleonora, his wife, that now hang in the Pitti. Thenceforth until the Duke's death by poison in 1538 Titian was perhaps never without an order

from him. Finally twenty-five masterpieces from Titian's brush adorned the walls of the palace at Urbino.

For him the master painted the beautiful *Venus* with the maid opening a chest in the background that now adorns the Tribune of the Uffizi, and is one of the gems of flesh painting. It has not the Greek purity of Giorgione's *Venus* at Dresden. It is only a beautiful woman resting upon a couch and portrayed with realistic power; but so splendid is the coloring, so marvelous the brushwork, that it is a joy forever. The same model seems to have served for the lovely portrait in the Uffizi called the *Bella,* that exquisite harmony in blue and gold, and perhaps for the lovely *Young Girl in a Fur Cloak* at Vienna. All look as if they might be idealized presentations of the Duchess Eleonora.

Bembo, the friend of Raphael, came to Venice after the death of Leo X, and lived a life of elegant literary and artistic leisure on his numerous sinecures. Titian painted his portrait late in the thirties, and also the portrait of Jacopo Nardi, the noble Florentine patriot who had fled from the Medicean tyranny, and was writing the history of the downfall of free institutions in his unhappy city.

We are glad to know that the master was a lover of music. In this same year he installed an organ in his house — probably the one that appears in the picture of *Venus and the Organ Player* in the Prado.

The year, however, was an unfortunate one; for in it Titian lost one of his most generous patrons in the death of Federigo Gonzaga, formerly Marquis, then Duke, of Mantua. He had been a true friend to Titian, and when the master's son Pomponio, who was to bring him so much sorrow, was five years of age, the Duke had bestowed upon the child the benefice of Medole, according to the evil custom of the time, which made sinecures of religious offices that should have been sacred trusts. Titian at once put the boy into priestly garments, and brought him up for the Church;

and despite Pomponio's evil character the master was tireless in his efforts to procure for him ecclesiastical preferments.

In August, 1541, Charles V came to Milan, and the master went there to meet him. Charles received him as graciously as before, and gave him a pension of one hundred ducats, payable out of the Milanese treasury. By October we find Titian back in Venice, where the "Triumvirate" grew into an "Academy" of learned or witty men, who used to meet for discourse and feasting, sometimes at Titian's house in the Biri Grande, at others in the palace of Aretino on the Grand Canal.

Among the Florentines who had sought in Venice a refuge from the tyranny of Alessandro de' Medici was Roberto Strozzi. He had a beautiful infant daughter, and her the master immortalized in the portrait at Berlin. As she stands beside the table petting her spaniel, she is perhaps the most charming portrait of a little girl that was ever made. In those days it was extremely rare to paint portraits of children, and that lends an especial interest to this delightful work.

It is believed that it was somewhere between 1543 and 1550 that the master painted the *Crowning with Thorns* in the Louvre, where the executioners with their staves are forcing the thorns into the Saviour's bleeding brow — a powerful work, deep in color and violent in action. When past ninety he painted the variant of it that he gave to Tintoretto and which is now at Munich, a work less splendid, but of greater religious fervor.

In 1543 Charles V was again in Italy, and he sent for Titian and Aretino to meet him at Busseto. Thither they went. The Emperor received them with great favor. He rode out with Aretino at his side, and gave Titian a likeness of his deceased Empress, Isabella of Portugal, and bade him make from it a portrait. This the master did, and we

see her still in the Prado, with her sweet refined beauty. There is perhaps less personality in it than there would have been had she sat to the painter; but she is very lovely, very delicate and pure. Charles was delighted with the picture, and took it with him when he retired to Yuste. He had it brought to him when dying, that his glazing eyes might look their last upon the wife whom he had loved so well.

Titian and Aretino went with the Emperor to meet the Pope at Bologna. Ecclesiastically speaking, Paul was one of the greater popes. He was the first of the pontiffs to realize the desperate importance of the Protestant revolt. It was he who organized the forces of the Church for its repression. A bull of his called the Jesuits into being, thus creating the army of marvelous discipline that was eventually to stem the tide. He introduced the Inquisition into Italy, and speedily annihilated heresy throughout the Peninsula. He convoked the Council of Trent. His noble bull against slavery is one of the great human documents, and while it became effective only after the lapse of centuries, it set the conscience of mankind against the worst of social institutions. Nor should it be forgotten that he was a patron of art and letters. We owe to him the *Last Judgment* of Michelangelo and the Farnese Palace, the grandest palace in Rome; and he made a great collection of antique statues.

But his private character was bad. His immorality had been a scandal even at the court of the Borgias. He owed his advancement to the beauty and shame of his sister, Julia Farnese, the paramour of Alexander VI, and was called in derision the "Petticoat Cardinal." But his worst fault was his doting fondness for his son Pier Luigi Farnese, a monster of unnatural vice and depravity without a parallel in the pages of history. His incredible outrage upon the young and saintly Bishop of Fano, openly com-

mitted and publicly boasted of, the horrible details of which we read in the pages of Varchi, one of the most conscientious and reliable of historians,— spoken of by Paul as a youthful indiscretion and solemnly pardoned in a papal bull — was one of the great weapons in the hands of the Protestants. When such a crime could be committed by a son of the Sovereign Pontiff and openly condoned, it looked indeed as if the reign of Antichrist had come. Nepotism was at that time a common fault of the popes; but perhaps none of them — not even Alexander Borgia — ever carried it so far as Paul.

Pier Luigi had two sons who were not indeed so base as he — no one could be that — but who were bad enough — Alessandro, whom Paul made a cardinal, and Ottaviano; and upon these he showered a large part of the doting love that he gave to their father. It was but just that this evil brood should cause the Pontiff's death. These unnatural grandsons plotted against him, and finally Ottaviano broke into revolt supported by the Cardinal. Then the old man's heart was broken, and he died in a fit of rage and grief.

Titian painted Paul's portrait and that of Pier Luigi, as well as that of the latter's younger son Rannuccio. It is said that when the master placed Paul's picture on the terrace to dry, those who passed by removed their hats, believing that it was indeed his Holiness. When we look at it now in the Neapolitan gallery we cannot doubt the story. It is the living presentment of the strong, stern, wolfish man.

Paul and his son, with characteristic meanness, paid the master nothing for his services, but instead promised him the canonry of Colle for Pomponio, which neither had the power to grant, as it was the gift of the Pope's grandson, Cardinal Farnese. A book might be written upon the efforts that Titian made to get this benefice for his scapegrace son, whom he seems to have loved as much as Paul

loved Pier Luigi. He besieged the Pope and the Cardinal with petitions. He besought the influence of all men capable of assisting him, from the Emperor to Michelangelo. He enlisted the services of Aretino. But the resistance of the Farnesi was hard to overcome.

Paul offered Titian the lucrative sinecure of the keepership of the Seals. The place was then occupied by Sebastiano Luciani, who by reason of the office is called Sebastian del Piombo. He was charged to pay out of its emoluments a pension to Giovanni da Udine. To accept would be to deprive two worthy colleagues of their means of support; and with a noble disinterestedness that should alone be an answer to the charges of avarice that have so often been made against the master, Titian refused.

Returning home, he painted for a merchant of Brussels resident in Venice named John der Hanna, whom the Italians called Giovanni d'Anna, the great *Ecce Homo* of the Viennese Gallery. It is a picture splendid in color and movement, and remarkable for the Herculean build of the Saviour, so unsuited to our conceptions of the Man of Sorrows, and for the crowd who reject him and call for Barabbas,— a crowd which is no rabble, but an assemblage of high born men and women. Aretino served for the model of Pontius Pilate, who stands at the head of the steps, pointing out Jesus to the crowd in a vain hope of clemency.

In 1545, Paul invited Titian to Rome. The master set out, accompanied by his son Orazio, who had become his assistant. They stopped at Urbino, where they were graciously entertained by the Duke, and furnished with an escort for their journey. Arrived in the Eternal City, they were housed in the Belvedere, and Vasari was assigned the master as a guide. With Vasari he visited the marvels of art that filled the Vatican and the many palaces and churches.

The master's first task was to paint the wonderful por-

trait of Paul with two of his grandsons. Ottavio is just entering, bowing obsequiously, while the Pope turns upon him with the exact look of a wolf that has been interrupted while gnawing a bone. Behind him stands the Cardinal, looking indifferently out of the picture. Paul was easily content with his own appearance, or he would never have allowed this damaging witness to go down to posterity. Still, he was probably dissatisfied with it, for the picture is unfinished. But however much the portrait may have pleased the evil family, all the master's efforts to get them to fulfil their promise to give Pomponio the benefice of Colle — the real object for which he had taken the journey — were in vain.

Had Paul foreseen the future — had he known that Ottavio would plot a rebellion against him, supported by the Cardinal — had he foreseen the day when he would die of a broken heart because of the ingratitude of these modern Absaloms,— he could not have looked worse than in this portrait. The likeness of him by the master at St. Petersburg has the same wolfish expression, which was no doubt habitual with his Holiness.

While in Rome Titian painted for Ottavio Farnese the splendid *Danae* at Naples, one of the loveliest of his many tributes to woman's beauty. It was in his studio when Michelangelo came to see him. Let Vasari tell the story:

"Now it chanced that Michelangelo and Vasari, going one day to see Titian in the Belvedere, beheld a picture, which he had just then finished, of a nude figure representing Danae, with Jupiter transformed into a shower of gold in her lap, many of those present beginning to extol the work (as people do when the artist stands by) praising it not a little: when, all having left the place, and talking of Titian's work, Buonarotti declared that the manner and coloring of that artist pleased him greatly, but that it was a pity the Venetians did not study drawing more, 'for if this artist,' said he, 'had been

aided by Art and knowledge of design, as he is by nature, he would have produced works which none could surpass, more especially in imitating life, seeing that he has a fine genius, and a graceful animated manner.' "

Perhaps there is some defect in the drawing of this figure that was visible to the keen eye of the great Florentine, but of which our duller vision sees no trace. To us it seems a masterpiece of draughtsmanship as of color, and the exquisite figure lying so gracefully upon the couch beneath the golden rain is a delight without alloy. Indeed, inspired by the splendid works of antiquity that were scattered on every hand, Titian here surpassed himself in the classic purity of his lines. The Cupid was taken from that of Praxiteles in the Vatican.

It is true that Titian's method of producing a picture was very different from that of the Florentines. They made preparatory drawings and finally a large cartoon, from which they painted. He made only a hasty sketch to get the hang of the picture as a whole, and painted direct from the living model. He drew with the brush, not the pencil, emphasizing the rounded modeling of the form, not its outlines. Often their pictures seem only colored drawings. His are always life transferred to the canvas.

While in Rome the master was able to render a signal service to his friend Sansovino at Venice. On December 15, 1545, the ceiling of the Library of St. Mark fell. The careless architect was fined and imprisoned; but Titian and Aretino had enough influence with the Doge and the Council of Ten not merely to secure his release and a remission of the fine, but to get him reinstated as architect of St. Mark's.

After a two years' sojourn in Rome, where the Farnesi had got all they could out of him and made him no return that history records, the master bent his steps homeward.

Before his departure he received the rare honor of being made a Roman citizen, an honor which, so far as we can learn, had been conferred on no other foreign artist save Michelangelo. Passing through Florence, he offered to paint the portrait of Duke Cosimo I, who declined. After viewing the treasures of Florentine art, then so much richer than they are to-day, the master returned to Venice, with little cause to congratulate himself upon his journey. Cosimo at least so far repented of his want of appreciation of the greatest painter of the time as afterward to acquire the *Venus with Cupid* now in the Tribune of the Uffizi, a magnificent presentation of full and voluptuous beauty. The face seems to have been painted from that of the master's daughter Lavinia.

About this time began the master's portraits of her. Titian was a devoted father. His patience with Pomponio surpasses belief. In one of his letters he speaks of his daughter as the dearest thing to him on earth. He has given her to us in various graceful shapes, carrying a flag or bearing in her upraised hands a basket of fruit or the head of John the Baptist. She was certainly fair to look upon, and her sweet face would indicate that she merited her father's love. As the daughter of the rich painter and ennobled by imperial decree, she must have had many suitors; but unlike most Italian girls she did not marry early. She remained with her father until June 19, 1555, when at the age of twenty-five she married a young man of good family, Cornelio Sarcinello, and went to live with him at Serravalle. Her father gave her a dowry of 2,400 ducats. It must have been a sad blow to the master, whose hearth was thus left desolate; for his sister Orsa had died in March, 1550. Lavinia appears again as a matron in the picture at Dresden. Her beauty has departed, but her face remains good and kind. We do not know the date of her death, which is believed to have taken place in 1561 or 1562;

but we know that the master survived to weep over her tomb.

In 1547 Sebastian del Piombo died, and Titian applied for the vacant office of the papal seals; but before the petition was acted upon he had to renounce it for the imperial service.

III

A MARVELOUS OLD AGE

In the fall of 1547 Charles was at Augsburg, where he had called a diet of the Empire. He had overwhelmed the Protestant princes at the battle of Mühlberg, and had taken prisoner their leader, John Frederick, Elector of Saxony. He was at the height of his power. When the news spread that he had sent for Titian there was great excitement in Venice. It was believed that thenceforth the master would work only for the Emperor; so everyone crowded to his studio, endeavoring to buy whatever he had on hand.

Titian hated to go. He had to give up the hope of the papal seals, and he feared that the canonry of Colle would be lost to Pomponio. Pope and Emperor were at daggers' points, so much so that the Pontiff regretted the Protestant defeat. Charles carried his resentment so far as to cause the assassination of Pier Luigi and to annex the dukedom of Parma and Piacenza that Paul had given his son — certainly a just punishment for unspeakable crimes, but a dastardly proceeding in a powerful monarch who could have taken the duchy by force of arms. Yet the result was contrary to the master's fears. Seeing the painter so high in favor with the all-powerful Emperor, the Farnesi deemed it wise to fulfil their promise, and Pomponio at last received the long-promised benefice.

At the age of seventy Titian set out upon his long journey. It was in January, 1548. The mountains were deep in snow. Even with the fine highways and comfortable inns of to-day we should deem it an intolerable hardship to have to ride in winter across the Alps. With the poor roads and wretched stopping places of those days such an undertaking must have been appalling. But Titian was of strong fiber. He seems always to have been indifferent to heat and cold. His annual journeys to Cadore were not made to escape the stifling heat of the Venetian summers, but were taken most frequently in autumn or even in the depth of winter.

So, with his three-score years and ten upon him, he set out, struggling through snow and storm across the windswept mountains. The Emperor had sent him money and an outfit for the journey. At length the aged master reached Augsburg, an exceptionally cold place, so different from the genial climate of Venice.

Augsburg was not an artistic city, like Nuremburg. But it was the richest place in Germany, one of the richest in the world. It was estimated that the three houses of merchant princes, the Fuggers, the Baumgartners and the Welsers, were worth collectively seven millions of gold gulden. Titian had met most of these merchants in the Fondaco at Venice. He found assembled around Charles a large part of the great dignitaries of Europe, both lay and ecclesiastical. The city was very gay, with a continual succession of balls and dinners, where we may be sure that the courtly master was often an honored guest.

But he found the Emperor sadly changed. He had been successful as few monarchs have been. He had humbled the pride of France. He had subdued rebellious Germany. He was master of Italy. Even the Sovereign Pontiff, whom he had made realize his power by the frightful sack of Rome, more atrocious than anything that Alaric or Gen-

seric had done, dared not stand against him. His ships rode every sea, and brought to him the spoils of Mexico and Peru, the riches of Cathay. Upon his vast dominions the sun never set. But all was in vain. Sad and disillusioned, he was tired of life, of conquest, of glory. Once so genial, he had grown cold, distant and solitary. He ate alone, devouring vast quantities of food in silence and with an abnormal appetite. Yet he received the master kindly, and had him paint two portraits, both of which are among the world's wonders. In the one at Munich he is seated, clothed in black, upon a porch with a curtain behind him, while to the right is a distant prospect. In the one at Madrid he appears in full armor upon the chestnut horse that bore him at the battle of Mühlberg. He issues alone from a wood, lance in hand. The picture has been injured by fire and restoration; yet it remains the greatest equestrian portrait ever painted. It is true to nature. We see the homely face with its protruding lower jaw, the slight form; yet there is in the aspect of this solitary horseman something that tells you that he is a mighty emperor before whom the nations tremble. It is not surprising that when it was finished, Charles, on June 10, 1548, doubled the master's pension on the revenues of Milan. As this was always in arrears, however, it was as much a vexation as a profit.

While at Augsburg Titian painted many of the dignitaries of the court and not a few of the imperial family. Unhappily these have nearly all perished. Fortunately his splendid portrait of the captive Elector has been preserved, and is now in the gallery at Vienna. It is a noble work. The unwieldy bulk of John Frederick is not concealed; but we can still see in the face the native dignity and the immovable conscience of the man who suffered a long, weary imprisonment, dragged around in the Emperor's train like a captive bear, rather than renounce his faith. At this time

Titian met Lucas Cranach, John Frederick's court painter, who attended his master in his captivity with a noble devotion. Cranach painted Titian's portrait, but unhappily the work has been lost.

In October, 1548, Titian returned to Venice, much enriched by the munificence of the many patrons that he had found at Augsburg, "not poor like a painter, but rich like a prince," in the words of Aretino. He was held, too, in much higher esteem by his fellow citizens. Like most communities, they did not recognize the full worth of their eminent townsman until he had won recognition abroad. It is said that the Council of Ten called him before it to get his judgment on the men and events that he had observed.

In two years the master was again on his way to Augsburg. Charles was again there, and had assembled all the dignitaries of the land at another diet. Weary of empire, he was determined to resign the crown. His motive in gathering the German princes together was to secure the election of his son Philip to be his successor. To this end he had summoned the young man from Spain, and bade him to do his utmost to win the favor of the Electors. But it was all in vain. Cold and forbidding in manner, Philip could not be gracious. The Germans saw in him the cruel fanatic who was to light the fires of the Inquisition to their hottest flame, to deluge Europe with innocent blood, and to inflict more excruciating agony than any despot in the annals of history. With all their hearts they rejected him.

But when Titian arrived at Augsburg on November 5, 1550, that rejection was not yet certain. The master found the same splendid court, the same gay life; but he found the Emperor sadder, gloomier, more solitary than before, now definitely resolved on abdication. He commissioned Titian to paint the picture now at Madrid which the Spaniards call the *Gloria,* showing Charles and his family in

their shrouds adoring the Trinity. The picture, which was not finished until four years later, has been much admired. We confess, however, that we find it most unsatisfactory, vast, theatrical and insincere. But it pleased Charles, who carried it with him to Yuste, and upon it his dying eyes were fixed, "so steadfastly as to awaken the apprehension of his physicians."

The object of bringing the aged master across the Alps was to paint Philip's portrait. He set to work, and produced the magnificent likeness of Philip in armor that adorns the Prado — a picture which won for him the heart of Mary Tudor and the English marriage. We may be sure that Titian did all in his power to embellish the homely features and insignificant figure of the Prince, who was noted especially for his ungainly feet. He also painted the equally splendid portraits of Philip in court costume that are at Florence and Naples. The young man was naturally pleased by these superb presentments of his person, which were true and yet flattering, and he rewarded the painter with a gift of four thousand ducats. He, for whom the master was to produce so many glorious works that were never to be paid for, started out as a munificent patron.

Despite his intense fanaticism the Prince was fond of pictures revealing woman in her unclothed beauty. Such pictures were forbidden in Spain by the Inquisition under terrible penalties; but raised above the reach of the frightful instrument of his tyranny, Philip filled his palaces with representations of the nude. For him Titian painted the *Venus,* the *Adam and Eve,* and the *Venus and Adonis* of the Prado, the *Diana and Actaeon* and the *Diana and Callisto* of Bridgewater House, the *Perseus and Andromeda* of the Wallace collection, and the *Rape of Europa* in Mrs. Gardner's Venetian Palace at Boston, besides the *Jupiter and Antiope* of the Louvre and many others — all glowing trib-

utes to woman's beauty in its unclothed splendor. At first Philip compensated the master most generously; but as the consequences of his misrule became more burdensome and his treasury, drained by disastrous wars, ran ever lower, he gradually fell away until at last he ceased to pay at all. One thing is strange, the indifference of his ministers to his express orders in the master's favor. Armed with his positive command, Titian would press for payment, and press in vain. No doubt there were other orders more urgent still.

In the January of 1551 the court moved from Augsburg to Innspruck, where Charles gave Titian a pension of 500 scudi on the Spanish treasury, on which, as on the stipend on the Neapolitan treasury that had been assigned him years before, the master was never to receive a ducat. Here they parted forever, and again the venerable painter crossed the Alps in the dead of winter — an undertaking which would appal a young soldier of to-day — and returned to Venice.

During his sojourn at Augsburg and Innspruck in 1550 and 1551 the master was most active in a singular mission. Aretino had conceived the grotesque ambition to be made a cardinal; and Titian besieged the Emperor and all his court to exert their influence in his behalf. Fortunately the Church was spared that ignominy.

Now when long past man's allotted span, Titian produced many of his noblest works. It is not possible to date most of them. Some critics attempt to do so; but their efforts are not void of presumption. We cannot even tell whether they were painted before or after his journeys to Augsburg. We only know that as he grew older a change came over his art. Failing eyesight compelled him to stand further from the canvas and to paint with broader strokes; but such was his mastery that this seems only to increase his power. Of this later style Vasari says:

"It is nevertheless true that his mode of proceeding in these last-mentioned works is very different from that pursued by him in those of his youth, the first being executed with a certain care and delicacy, which renders the work equally effective, whether seen at a distance or examined closely; while those of a later period, executed in bold strokes and with dashes, can scarcely be distinguished when the observer is near them, but if viewed from the proper distance they appear perfect. This mode of his, imitated by artists who have thought to show proof of facility, has given occasion to many wretched pictures, which probably comes from the fact that whereas many believe the works of Titian, done in the manner above described, to have been executed without labor, that is not the truth, and these persons have been deceived; it is indeed well known that Titian went over them many times, nay, so frequently, that the labor expended on them is most obvious. And this method of proceeding is a judicious, beautiful, and admirable one, since it causes the paintings so treated to appear living, they being executed with profound art, while that art is nevertheless concealed."

It is apparent that this bold manner of painting did not really please the Florentine; for later on he says:

". . . and it would have been well if he had worked for his amusement alone during these latter years, that he might not have diminished the reputation gained in his best days by works of inferior merit, performed at a period of life when nature tends inevitably to decline, and consequent imperfection."

Few will concur with Vasari in this judgment. It is true that many of the master's later pictures are impressionistic in style and must be looked at from a distance; it is true that the brilliant colors of his youth gradually approach a deep rich monochrome, as with Rembrandt in his later works; but his dramatic power continually increases. His religious pictures have a deeper significance; while his joy in woman's naked beauty grows only more intense. It

must be admitted that this bold method of painting has been the ruin of many foolish men who have tried to begin where the master left off; but that was no fault of his.

The portraits of his later days, such as the *Man with the Baton* at Munich, the *Man with the Palm* at Dresden, the picture at Cassel called the *Duke of Atri, Jacopo Strada* at Vienna and the several portraits of himself, are among his greatest masterpieces. They are finished with more minuteness than most of his later subject pieces.

In 1554 Titian made the portrait of Francesco Vanier, the last of the Doges whom he was called upon to paint. Owing to his great age he was excused from painting the last two that were elected before he died, yet was allowed to retain his broker's patent, and was exempted from the war tax, "on account of his great excellence."

That he was not jealous of rising talent, as has been charged, is apparent from the fact that when in the autumn of 1556 he and Sansovino were appointed to award the decoration of the hall of the Library of St. Mark, they gave the commission to Paul Veronese, who had been but a year in Venice, and who was thus enabled to display fully for the first time his supreme talents as a decorative painter. So, Dolce says of him, "He never abuses other painters, but is ready and willing to praise those who deserve it."

It is recorded that he advised Venetians who went to Bergamo to have their portraits painted by Moroni; and that when the dignitaries of Parma Cathedral were dissatisfied with Correggio's charge for frescoing the dome and called Titian in to value the work, the master exclaimed, "If you filled your dome with gold it would not pay for such a masterpiece."

On October 21, 1556, a great sorrow came to the master. Aretino, his life-long friend, passed away. Some say that he died of apoplexy; but the accepted version is that at one of his bacchanalian feasts he laughed so heartily over

a salacious anecdote that he lost his balance, and, falling backward, fractured his skull. He regained consciousness, and received extreme unction. Then he said, "Now that I am greased keep me from the rats"; and so he died as he had lived, with an unseemly jest upon his lips. The general feeling was no doubt that expressed in a letter of Antonio Pola to the Duke of Mantua: "On reaching Venice I found that that scoundrel Aretino had surrendered his soul to Satan. His death, I think, will not displease many, and particularly not those who are henceforth relieved from paying tribute to the brute." But to Titian he had been a devoted and useful friend, and the venerable master, now in his eightieth year, must have missed him sorely. Sansovino yet remained, but he too passed away on November 27, 1570, leaving Titian the last survivor of the Triumvirate.

In 1554 Titian sent to Philip the *Danae* at Madrid, of which replicas exist at St. Petersburg and Vienna. The form is more realistic and less beautiful than that at Naples and the painting broader, while the Cupid gives place to an old woman, who catches in her apron the falling gold. It is probably this touch of the grotesque combined with its richer color that made the picture so much more popular than its Neapolitan counterpart. As the master grew older he adhered closer to the model. The *Venus and Adonis* was sent to Philip in England, no doubt to the great disapproval of the bigoted Mary. It was not the replica that is now in the National Gallery, but the one in the Prado.

In April, 1554, the sorely tried master at length lost patience with the worthless Pomponio. He took from him the benefice of Medole, and gave it to a nephew, who, let us hope, discharged his sacred functions in a more becoming manner. When in the following October the benefice of Sant' Andrea del Fabbro near Mestre was assigned to Titian, he retained its emoluments for himself. Finally,

however, he relented, and in 1557 he turned it over to Pomponio.

On March 22, 1555, the Council ordered of the Master the picture of *Doge Grimani adoring Religion,* which is so conspicuous in the Doge's Palace; but with that strange indifference with which he treated almost all commissions from the Venetian state, he left it unfinished when he died twenty-one years later. We may believe that the fine figure of the kneeling Doge is his; but let us hope that that most uninspired figure of Religion is by one of the pupils who finished the picture after his death. The grand St. Mark is worthy of the master, but seems to be the work of Palma Giovane.

Charles V died on September 21, 1558, and on the following Christmas Philip ordered that the arrears of his pension due Titian by the Milanese treasury should be paid. The sum was a very large one, exceeding two thousand ducats. Feeling unequal to the journey, the aged master sent Orazio. It almost cost Orazio's life. At Milan he put up with a relative of Aretino's, a sculptor named Leone Leoni, whom Titian had favored greatly. Tempted, apparently, by the money that Orazio had collected, Leone set upon him in his own house, and Orazio escaped to the street only after he had been grievously wounded. Titian was loud in his demands for justice; but Leoni was a favorite with the Spanish government, and was let off with a small fine. Even after Orazio's return to Venice Leone sought to murder him through hired bravos, so that the Council granted the painter the right to go about with arms.

In 1553, Titian's brother Francesco died at Cadore. He showed his affection for Titian by making him his universal legatee. He had proved himself a painter of no mean ability, but had renounced the brush for the sword, and in his later days had held office in their native home, where he displayed wisdom, courage and justice. We may

believe that the death of his only brother was a sad blow to the venerable master.

In 1563, Titian painted two pictures showing the breadth of his achievement, the *St. Jerome* of the Brera, a symphony in richest brown, revealing the dark solemnity of the twilight forest with the holy anchorite, and the *Venus with the Mirror* at St. Petersburg, one of his richest presentations of woman's nude beauty.

In 1566, for some unexplained reason, perhaps because of his wealth, the Council took away the master's exemption from taxes, and required him to make a return of his income to the assessors. That return is amusing, quite equal to any made by a modern tax dodger or traveler returning from Europe. His properties are all in a wretched condition and yielding the scantiest of revenues. No mention is made of his pensions, the sums received for pictures, or the large profits that he was deriving from his timber concessions in the Alps.

Yet he was generous to the last, entertaining with princely hospitality his friends and all distinguished visitors to the city. It is said that when Cardinal Granvelle, the minister of Philip II, and Cardinal Pacheco came to see him, he threw his purse to his servant, bidding him prepare a royal feast, "for all the world is coming to dine with me." Again, when Henry III passed through on his way from Poland to assume the crown of France, Titian is said to have made him a present of all the pictures of which he asked the price.

In 1569, at the age of ninety-three, Titian seems to have felt that the end was approaching. He procured a decree authorizing him to transfer his broker's patent to Orazio, and two years later he got Philip to transfer to Orazio his Milanese pension.

The latter year brought to Christendom and to the aged master a great joy. For years the Turks had been pressing

Venice hard, seizing one outpost after another, and threatening to sweep her from the seas; but on October 7, 1571, the battle of Lepanto, gained by the combined fleets of Venice and Spain, put a stop to the Ottoman advance, and marked the turning point in their baleful career. The rejoicings at Venice were frantic, and we may believe that the aged painter, who loved the city so much, looked on with a thankful heart; though the picture that he painted at Philip's command to celebrate the event adds little to his fame. This, however, was no fault of his. It was designed by Philip himself, and painted from the sketch made by Sanchez Coello. Titian realized the hopeless character of the composition, and protested in vain that the Spanish master should be allowed to complete his work.

It is strange how the old man's joy in woman's beauty persisted to the end along with a deepening sense of the significance of the great Christian tragedy. When past ninety he painted the glorious *Venus and her Nymphs equipping Cupid* in the Borghese Gallery, usually called the *Three Graces,* a masterpiece of broad and effective painting which, close at hand, seems a daub, but at the proper distance resolves itself into a delightful harmony; and he was past eighty when he painted the *Jupiter and Antiope* of the Louvre, perhaps the most beautiful of all his pagan pictures, save the *Sacred and Profane Love.* Whether we take the nude form of the sleeping Antiope, pure as if it came from a Grecian chisel, the realistic power of the Satyr, or the splendid landscape, it is a marvelous work, worthy of his maturest days. When the conflagration occurred in the Palace of the Prado that caused the destruction of so many priceless masterpieces, Philip III inquired anxiously if this picture had been saved. Being told that it had been, he gave a sigh of relief, and answered, "That is a comfort, for the rest can be replaced." Those who see it now where with almost criminal stupidity it has been hung on

the dark side of the long gallery in the Louvre, cannot imagine its glory when it hung upon the wall opposite. Its deep, rich color demands a world of light.

Many letters of Titian to Philip have been preserved. They are of interest chiefly as showing the dates of his pictures and his unavailing efforts to get the remuneration due. In the last, dated February 27, 1576, less than a year before his death, the master calls the monarch's attention to the fact that for twenty years he has received no compensation for the many pictures sent. No doubt his death canceled the debt in Philip's mind.

Titian's last two pictures show that up to the end there was no narrowing of his interest. The nude *Shepherdess and Shepherd* at Vienna, one of the most sensuous of his works, was left unfinished at his death, as was the *Pietà* of the Venice Academy. The latter picture was begun in payment for a burial place in the Church of the Frari; but a disagreement with the monks ensued, Titian ceased to work upon it, and provided in his will that he should be buried at Cadore. It is a fine picture, showing the dead Christ upon his mother's knees, while a grand and tragic figure of the Magdalen raises her hand in the agony of her grief. When the master had passed away Palma Giovane completed it, placing upon it the inscription, "What Titian began Palma finished reverently and dedicated to God."

In 1576 there was a great plague in Venice. Fifty thousand people — more than a fourth of the population — died in a few months. The most horrible scenes took place. Parents forsook their children, children their parents. All were overcome with terror. Some rushed to the churches in a frenzied appeal to the pitiless heavens. Others gave themselves over in their despair to unbridled debauchery. Amid such surroundings the master was stricken with the disease, and on August 27, 1576, he passed away at his home in the Biri Grande. At the same time

Orazio was dying of the malady in the Lazzaretto Vecchio. Though married, he left no descendants, so that there were none to bear Titian's name to future generations.

A decree of the Council forbade the interment within the city of anyone dying of the plague; but in Titian's case the law was set aside, and he was borne by the Canons of St. Mark to the chapel of the Crucified Saviour in the Frari, which he had chosen for his last resting place. The worthless Pomponio had no doubt fled; for in his absence thieves broke into the vacant house, and robbed it of much of its precious contents. He promptly squandered the estate. In 1580 he sold the house where the master was born, and in 1581 the home in the Biri Grande. When last heard of in 1594 he was living in great poverty at San Pietro in Castello at Venice.

Until 1852 no monument marked the grave of the master who alone disputes with Raphael the title of the Prince of Painters. In that year the Austrian Emperor caused the present sumptuous tomb to be erected by the sculptor Zandomenighi.

RUBENS

1577–1640

I

EARLY DAYS

Sir Peter Paul Rubens, who was to have the most brilliant career in the history of art, who was to live like a prince and to be the friend and counselor of monarchs, first saw the light under distressing circumstances.

His father, Jan Rubens, was born at Antwerp on March 13, 1530. His ancestors can be traced back to 1396. They were all tanners and druggists, prosperous men who lived in homes of their own and possessed real property besides. As always happens in such families, the time arrived when they concluded that they must have a lawyer to add dignity to the name. So, when Jan was twenty years of age he was sent to Italy to study law. This he did at Padua and Rome, and after seven years he returned to his native city with a Roman diploma and the graceful manners of the South. His fellow townsmen received him with favor, and within five years after his return he was elected an alderman, a position then conferred only on the leading citizens. In the meantime he had on November 29, 1561, taken the wisest step of his life in marrying Maria Pypelinckx, one of the noblest of women, who was to be the good angel of his house.

At this time Protestant doctrines were making great progress in the Low Countries, and by 1562, Jan had adopted that faith. If peace had continued, all would have gone well, and Jan would have died one of the most honored

of Antwerp's burghers. He was reëlected as alderman and held the office as long as he resided in the city. But Philip II was determined to extirpate heresy, even if in so doing he made a wilderness of his fairest provinces. After exhausting milder expedients, he sent the remorseless Duke of Alva to wipe out the new religion in blood. Jan, who was not the stuff that martyrs are made of, bent before the storm and professed his devotion to the Church. But he saw many who were conforming burned or decapitated for former errors, and when at last the heads of Egmont and Horn fell upon the block, he quietly slipped across the German frontier with his wife and two surviving children, and settled in Cologne. Believing himself safe here, he ceased to attend the mass, and for this he would have been expelled from the Catholic city in spite of his again submitting humbly to the Church, but for his life's crowning disaster, his retention as her advocate by Anne, the wife of William the Silent. Daughter of Maurice, Elector of Saxony, she had borne William three children; but she was a frivolous and dissipated woman. She refused to share the hardships of his wandering life, and settled down to enjoy herself at Cologne. It is not surprising that she became enamored of Jan with his handsome person and graceful manners; nor is it surprising that he should have yielded to the blandishments of one of her rank in an age when it was considered almost impossible for a princess to stoop from her high estate to love a common mortal; and so, while William was traveling from court to court, making superhuman exertions to rouse the Protestant princes to join in a united effort for the defense of their faith, Anne was spending her time in a guilty intrigue accompanied with much hard drink. It must be said in her defense, however, that William was himself far from a model of the conjugal virtues. At last the news

reached the injured husband, and as Jan was riding to visit Anne at her home at Siegen, whither she had removed, he was arrested by order of John of Nassau, William's brother, in whose territory Siegen lay, and imprisoned in the castle of Dillenburg, where William had himself been born. The legal punishment for Jan's crime was death; but at this critical moment, when the fate of Protestantism hung trembling in the balance, William could not afford to risk a breach with Saxony, nor to impair his standing by a domestic scandal; and so he contented himself with having Jan cast into a dungeon, and with repudiating the sickly infant that Anne shortly afterward bore.

For three weeks his distracted wife did not know what had become of Jan, and when at last she learned the truth, she wrote him the noblest letters ever written by an injured woman to an erring husband, assuring him of her forgiveness and devotion and encouraging him to bear up under his misfortune. Jan himself, who was not a bad man, but only weak, was profoundly penitent, and wrote her the most remorseful letters. She at once inaugurated a vigorous campaign for his liberation, besieging William and his brother with letters and petitions. She even resorted to threats, assuring them that if her husband was executed she would publish the whole affair and bring disgrace on the house of Orange. Jan himself wrote a letter to William which is a curious example of the pedantry of the times. He seeks to reconcile William to his dishonor by citing instances of the great men of history who bore such outrages with equanimity; and he assures him that it was not so bad after all, since a doctor of laws is not a base-born hind, but is ranked by many as next below a baron! Finally, after two years his wife secured Jan's release, but on condition that he should reside in the town of Siegen. Here they took a house in the Bourgstrasse,

and here on June 28, 1577, the great painter was born. It was the day of Saints Peter and Paul, and for them he was named.

The life of the family in Siegen was very hard. Jan could turn his talents as a lawyer to no account in that trifling village; their estates in Flanders had been sequestered; and the Nassaus used their power to extort from the unhappy couple every thaler that they could raise. Their conduct would have been contemptible but for their terrible need of money to sustain the tottering cause of the Protestant faith. A remaining document proves that they wrung from Jan's wife eight thousand thalers.

The next year, on May 15, 1578, Jan, in consideration of a substantial payment, received permission to remove to Cologne. Anne of Saxony was dead, and William had for two years been married to a worthier woman, so that he could afford to be lenient. Jan promptly transferred his residence to the city, and entered again upon the successful practice of his profession, having amongst his clients some of the leading nobles of the vicinity.

His Protestantism had never been of a very robust type, and was due as much to association as to conviction. In the intensely Catholic city of Cologne every motive of prudence urged a reconciliation with the ancient faith; and there were few, if any, to sustain him in the new. So Jan and his family returned to the bosom of the Church. This apparently trifling occurrence was one of the great events in the history of art; for if Rubens had been brought up in the hard Calvinism of the time, which looked on beauty and splendor as things accursed, he could never have been the mighty master that we know.

Jan continued to reside in Cologne, prosperous and honored, until his death on May 1, 1587. No one knew the cause of his imprisonment, which was attributed to political reasons. He taught Peter Paul the rudiments of Latin,

and proved himself, as always, a kind and loving husband and father. By common consent the Siegen episode was never mentioned, and Rubens died in the belief that he was born at Cologne. It is only of recent years that the truth has come to light.

Maria Pypelinckx, who had loved her husband so devotedly, was heart-broken at his death, and never ceased to mourn her loss; but her duties to her family compelled her to bear up. The year following she returned to Antwerp with her remaining children, Blandine, Philip and Peter Paul, the eldest having gone to Italy two years before. She found her native city sadly changed. Alva had swept over it like a pestilence. Thousands of its citizens had perished at the stake or on the scaffold; thousands had sought refuge in other lands; and when the monster had been recalled, war and civil tumult had continued to do their worst. Protestantism had been almost eradicated; but the busiest mart in Europe had been reduced in population from 90,000 to 45,000. Grass grew in its streets. However, prosperity was slowly returning. Even the bigoted mind of Philip II was forced to perceive that persecution could be carried too far, and a measure of toleration was granted. The fagots ceased to burn about the bloody stake, and many of the exiles were coming back to their devastated homes.

Though much reduced in circumstances, Maria Pypelinckx took a handsome house that is still standing in the Meir, the largest square in Antwerp; and for two years Rubens went to school, and obtained the only systematic instruction that he received; though he afterwards became through his own exertions a man of distinguished acquirements. His school master was Rumaldus Verdonck, a learned humanist. The school was behind the cathedral, where is now the Marché au Lait. A schoolmate bears witness that Rubens was a diligent pupil, beloved by all the

scholars for his amiable qualities. He pursued his study of Latin, then the principal subject taught, and all through life he wrote Latin with classic purity, and even spoke it with ease.

The growing embarrassment of the family compelled the sons to seek a means of livelihood. Philip became a tutor; and in 1590, at the age of thirteen, Rubens entered the service of Marguérite de Ligne, dowager Countess de Lalaing, as a page. She was the owner of several castles in Germany and the Low Countries, and maintained a regular court. At this early age Rubens received that instruction in courtly ceremonies and courtly manners which was to prove of such value in later life.

His vocation for art, however, was irresistible, and after a year he left the service of the Countess to enter the studio of Tobias Verhæcht, an obscure painter at Antwerp. The choice of a master was probably due to the fact that Verhæcht was related to Rubens' mother He seems to have been only a painter of landscapes, and a very poor one at that

It was an admirable time to begin the career of a painter. The people of Flanders had always been devoted to the fine arts, and under the Van Eycks and their successors their churches had been sumptuously adorned. The fury of the iconoclasts had, however, destroyed most of the pictures and other decorations of religious edifices, and it was certain that with returning prosperity these must be replaced.

It was inevitable that a boy as bright as Rubens should soon perceive the incapacity of his first master, and six months later we find him in the studio of Adam van Noort. It used to be universally believed that Van Noort was a drunken boor, who drove Rubens from his studio by his coarse brutality. How this legend grew up we do not know, but it seems certain now that Van Noort was a worthy man

much esteemed by his fellow-townsmen. He lived to a great age and acquired considerable property. No works of his can now be identified with certainty; but he was regarded as an able painter.

The leading artist in Antwerp was Otto van Veen, and after four years with Van Noort, Rubens wisely passed on to his more eminent colleague. And this was a most fortunate occurrence. Van Veen was not only a distinguished painter, he was a scholar and a gentleman of wide attainments and great culture. He had spent years in Italy, and had acquired a profound love for the literature and art of antiquity. He was a man of great versatility. He wrote Latin verses that were much admired, and he was also esteemed as a military engineer. Of distinguished manners and graceful bearing, he was welcomed at the courts of princes. He became much attached to his brilliant pupil, and took pleasure in imparting to him his stores of learning of all kinds. Rubens remained with him for nearly four years, and the daily converse with such a man was of inestimable value in the development of the youth's intellect, the cultivation of his tastes and the formation of his manners.

At last the time came for Rubens to leave the studio of his kind master. In 1598 he was admitted to the Guild of St. Luke, and set up for himself. He prospered, but of the pictures of those early days no trace remains. They are no great loss. Of all the great artists Rubens was the slowest to develop, and we may be sure that those early works were poor stuff. We only know from the inventory that he used his beloved mother as a model, and that he was associated with Van Veen in decorating the city when the Archduke Albert, son of the Emperor Maximilian II, and his wife, the Infanta Isabella, daughter of Philip II, came in 1599 to inaugurate their enlightened rule over the distracted land.

But the heart of the youth longed for Italy. It was then the universal custom of Flemish artists to make the Italian pilgrimage. All of Rubens' three masters had gone, and the last had instilled into the ardent mind of his pupil a burning desire to see the glories that lay beyond the Alps. So, on May 9, 1600, Rubens set out upon the journey.

It must have been a hard trial to part from the mother whom he loved so much and who so richly merited his affection. He did not know her full worth; he knew nothing of her courage and devotion at the time of her husband's imprisonment; but he knew that she had been the kindest, most loving, prudent and sagacious of mothers, and his heart must have bled as he rode away. She, too, must have wept bitter tears as she looked her last upon the beloved son whom she was never to see again; but with that self-sacrifice that had marked her every act, we may be sure that she encouraged him in a step so essential to his development.

II

IN SOUTHERN LANDS

Rubens went straight to Venice, for whose art he had an especial affinity. Venice was then at the height of her splendor. Her power had departed; and with Vasco da Gama's discovery of the sea-route to the East, the wealth of the Indies had ceased to pour into her lap. But as yet there was no outward evidence of decay. The great palaces were still new, and others were being built. The master works of the Venetian school, the greatest in the history of painting, were glowing upon the canvas in their pristine freshness. Titian died only one year before Rubens' birth, and his disciples were still following in his footsteps, though at a long distance. The sight of so much

magnificence and beauty must have made a profound impression on the young man, who had known only the dark, somber cities of the North.

Rubens no doubt intended to remain only a year or two in the South, but in July, 1600, an event occurred which was to have a marked effect upon his destiny. Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, saw some of Rubens' pictures, and was so pleased with them that he invited the young man to become his court painter. The proposition was as flattering as it was unexpected, and Rubens accepted.

The fact that Vincenzo should have been attracted by the kind of pictures that Rubens then painted proves either that his taste was poor, or that he possessed extraordinary discernment, and perceived the butterfly within the chrysalis. As Rubens was to remain for eight years in the service of this remarkable individual, it is necessary to speak somewhat of his character. He was a young man of twenty-eight, handsome in person, athletic and active, fond of horses and field sports. He was cultivated, an admirer of the fine arts, and he delighted to associate with artists and scholars. His musicians and troup of actors were the best in Italy. Unhappily these fine qualities were marred by still greater defects. He was inordinately amorous, falling passionately in love with every pretty woman that he met. He was a reckless gambler, and lost vast sums at play. He was extravagantly fond of pomp and pageantry, kept in his stables one hundred and fifty magnificent horses, and spent in splendid entertainments far more than the limited revenues of his dukedom would justify, so that he was always in straits for money. Capricious and impetuous, he was at the same time a bigot and a debauchee. His vices did not affect Rubens, who, amid all the riot of the court, always maintained his dignity with the quiet assurance of the born gentleman; but the impoverishment of the ducal treasury resulted in many vexa-

tious delays in the payment of the promised stipend. Perhaps if Rubens had known Vincenzo better he would have declined the offer; but at Venice he saw only a young ruler of distinguished presence and engaging manners, who loved the arts.

It was not alone the certainty of steady employment that attracted Rubens to the Duke's service. In the palaces at Mantua there was then collected the finest gallery of art in Europe. In gathering it together Isabella d'Este had used her exquisite taste and rare opportunities, and her successors had been almost equally eager in their pursuit of artistic treasures. There were not only numerous paintings by the greatest masters of Italy; but the collection of antique statues begun by Mantegna had grown to large dimensions. The place therefore offered extraordinary inducements to a young man ambitious to improve himself in his art and as ardently devoted to the study of the remains of antiquity. The Dukes of Mantua also kept a remarkable menagerie; and it was probably here that Rubens acquired that skill in depicting all manner of wild beasts that is exhibited in many of his later works.

The court at Mantua was in some respects superior to its Duke. The Duchess Leonora de' Medici, sister of her who was to become the second wife of Henry IV of France, was a lady of many charms and many virtues; a cultivated and elegant woman, who did her best to continue the traditions of Isabella d'Este. Her court was a place to acquire the grace of manner, the charm of conversation, the refinements of social intercourse so ably taught in Castiglione's "Il Cortegiano," which was the accepted standard for the Italian gentleman.

In the decoration of the walls of the Mantuan palaces two master spirits had ruled, Mantegna and Giulio Romano. For the severe art of Mantegna Rubens can have felt no great affection. It is true that he made a free transcription

of Mantegna's *Triumph of Julius Cæsar;* but this was done long years afterward, when the pictures had been removed to England. Rubens had no love for the primitives, and he probably esteemed Mantegna only as an exponent of antique art. The paintings of Giulio Romano, on the contrary, influenced him profoundly. Giulio was his true forerunner. In the powerful, passionate, sensual forms that adorn the walls of the Palazzo del Te, we see the archetypes of the far more powerful, far more passionate, far more sensual forms that the mighty Fleming was afterward to project upon the canvas. It may be that Rubens would have reached the same goal had his eyes never feasted on Giulio's bold creations; but his long association at this formative period with an art so similar to that which he afterwards developed could scarcely have been without its influence.

Hardly had Rubens entered Vincenzo's service when he went with the Duke to Florence, which was then far richer in works of art than at the present day, when so many of its masterpieces have perished, or gone to enrich distant lands. Here for the first time Rubens saw some of the master-works of Michelangelo, which were to have so enduring an influence upon his style. The rich collections of the Medici were also revealed to his gaze; and we can imagine the delight with which he contemplated the treasures that still remain to fill us with admiration. It was possibly at this time that Rubens made from some copy that has since perished that wonderful drawing of Leonardo da Vinci's *Battle of the Standard,* which gives us our best conception of that lost masterpiece. The skill displayed in the drawing, however, argues for a much later date. The occasion of the visit was to attend the marriage of Marie de' Medici with Henry IV. The Florentine Duke, proud that a descendant of shopkeepers should be called to one of the greatest thrones in Europe, celebrated the

occasion with shows and pageants of surpassing magnificence, which must have strengthened in the mind of the young artist that love of the glory of this world of which he was to become the supreme exponent.

From Florence Vincenzo with his court passed on to Genoa. Here the artist busily studied and painted. He greatly admired the palaces of that superb city, and made drawings which he afterwards used in a volume on its architecture. At the end of six months he returned to Mantua, and resumed his labors. He delighted to copy the works of the great masters, particularly those of Titian; and his skill as a copyist must have impressed Vincenzo; for in August, 1601, he sent Rubens to Rome to make copies of the masterpieces there for the adornment of his palace. He provided the artist with a letter of warm recommendation to Cardinal Montalto, then a great personage at the Vatican. The Cardinal received Rubens graciously, and until the April of the following year the latter remained in Rome, where he had so much longed to be. Everything in the Eternal City appealed to his artistic instincts. It would be hard to say whether he was most delighted with the gorgeous ceremonials of the Church, the magnificent remains of pagan antiquity, or the masterpieces of Raphael and Michelangelo. He arrived in the burning heat of summer, but nothing restrained his ardor, and with tireless energy he sought out the countless marvels that lay on every hand. Meanwhile, his courtly manners made him a welcome guest in the palaces of the great. He attested his admiration for Michelangelo by drawing the Prophets and Sibyls and the *Creation of Man* on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel; and years afterward, in his pictures of the *Last Judgment* he showed how carefully he had studied the presentation of the same subject by the Italian titan.

Of his contemporaries it was Caravaggio who influenced him most. A vigorous realist, Caravaggio did much to

infuse life into art, and to save it from the academic weakness that was creeping over it; but his system of painting with fierce high-lights beside shadows impossibly black, as though light had no diffusive power, was essentially vicious. Still, Rubens borrowed it in large measure, and it took years to free him from that pernicious style.

Another artist who influenced Rubens greatly and whose influence was unhappily never to be shaken off, was Baroccio. From him Rubens acquired that taste for excessive curves which lends a baroque appearance even to his greatest works.

He was often in straits for money, for Vincenzo generally found other ways of spending his revenues that were more agreeable than the payment of his debts; so, instead of devoting all his time to the copies that he had come to make, Rubens was forced to look around for profitable employment. The Archduke Albert had been a cardinal, taking his title from the ancient church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme beside the walls of Rome. He had been released from his priestly vows, for which he had no vocation, to marry the Infanta Isabella, and to assume the regency of Flanders. He and his equally enlightened wife had given great offense at the Vatican by the broad measure of tolerance that they had granted, and as a means of conciliation Albert wished to present an altar-piece to his titular church. Rubens had left many friends at home, and through their influence he was chosen for the commission. So he painted the large pictures that hung in the church until they were carried to France during the Revolution, and which have found their way to the Museum of Grasse. Coarse and commonplace, with hard colors, opaque shadows and red flesh-tones, they give slight promise of future greatness. Still it must be confessed that they have a certain vitality and decorative effect. These are the first of the master's works that we are able to identify.

They are certainly humble beginnings of a great career. But there was one peculiarity about Rubens — he continually advanced. There was no backward step in his career, and the works of each year were superior to those of any that had preceded until death stayed his hand.

In April, 1602, Rubens was back in Mantua, and in the summer a great pleasure awaited him. Philip, his much loved elder brother, who, as we have said, was a tutor in a wealthy family, had accompanied his pupil, William Richardot, to Italy, and Rubens met him at Verona.

The next year Rubens was sent on the first of those missions to foreign courts which were to become such a feature of his distinguished career.

Mantua was a feeble state, and it existed only by the sufferance of its neighbors. Of these the strongest and most aggressive was Spain. It was therefore essential that Vincenzo should remain on good terms with the Spanish sovereign. Philip II had passed on to a land where it is to be hoped that his ears were no longer regaled by the shrieks of heretics perishing in slow agony at the stake, and his blood-stained throne was occupied by his feeble son, Philip III. He was not averse to the burning of misbelievers, but his principal occupation was the chase, while he left affairs of state to be mismanaged by his incompetent minister, the Duke of Lerma. In order to propitiate the monarch, Vincenzo determined to send him some of the splendid horses, for which the ducal stables were famous, and a magnificent gilded coach. For De Lerma, who was a lover of the fine arts, he had numerous excellent copies made of the works of Raphael and other Italian masters. There were also presents for many other lesser dignitaries whose favor it was important to win.

When the Duke looked around for a suitable bearer of his gifts, he could find none so acceptable as his courtly painter. So in March, 1603, Rubens set out, traveling by

way of Bologna and Florence to Leghorn, and thence by sea to Alicante. He proceeded to Madrid, but found that the court was at Valladolid. He remained in the capital long enough to see its treasures of art, and was particularly carried away by the noble works of Titian and Raphael that now adorn the Prado. When he reached Valladolid the court had moved on to Burgos. Rubens found there, however, Iberti, the minister of Duke Vincenzo at the Spanish court, to whom he bore letters of strongest commendation, directing that the painter should be associated in the presentation of the gifts.

The horses and coach arrived in excellent condition, but when they unpacked the pictures, they found that they had got wet on the trip from Alicante, and were apparently ruined. Iberti wanted Rubens to call in a lot of Spanish artists and hastily paint an equal number of pictures to take their places. This Rubens was unwilling to do. At Madrid he had formed a poor opinion of the artists of Spain, and desired no coöperation with them. So he cleaned and dried the damaged works, and proceeded to restore them. Two, however, were injured beyond recovery, and in the place of these he painted the *Democritus* and the *Heraclitus* that now hang in the Prado. The sight of them convinces us of his wisdom in doing no more; for they are poor creations without great vitality and with flesh-tints of an unpleasant brown.

The day of presentation arrived. Iberti, who deemed a mere painter unworthy to be associated with a man of his eminence on such an occasion, did not present Rubens to the King and Queen, as he had been instructed to do, but assumed all the honors himself. Their Majesties were delighted with the magnificent horses and the gilded coach, and manifested their pleasure in their constant use. When it came to De Lerma, the accidental injury to the pictures proved an unexpected boon. Seeing their condition, he took

them for priceless originals, and was overjoyed to receive them. Rubens and Iberti were too wise to undeceive him. Anyone who has seen a professional connoisseur caught in a mistake will realize that that would have occasioned De Lerma's undying enmity.

Rubens was detained at the Spanish court for almost a year. It is not recorded that he was ever presented to the King or Queen, and the company of the arrogant Spanish grandees, who considered any painter immeasurably their inferior, could not have been very agreeable. Had he been at Madrid he could have found compensation in the study of the glorious masterpieces of Italian art that filled its palaces. But at Valladolid there was no intellectual occupation. Rubens, whose salary was as usual in arrears, painted some portraits to fill his purse; but these cannot now be identified with certainty. He also painted for the Duke de Lerma the series of the Twelve Apostles now at the Prado, inferior productions which no one would notice if by a lesser hand.

It was no doubt at this time that Rubens learned Spanish, thus almost completing his extraordinary accomplishments as a linguist. German he had learned in childhood at Cologne. Flemish, Dutch and French were all currently spoken at Antwerp, and he had acquired them all. During his eight years in Italy he attained complete mastery of Italian, which was then the language of diplomacy and of polite intercourse, occupying the place that French afterwards achieved; and the greater part of his letters are in that tongue. Besides, he was, as we have said, proficient in Latin, then the language of the learned throughout the world. With his acquisition of Spanish he was able to converse with all the men of Western Europe save the English, and their speech he was to learn later on.

Thoroughly weary of the empty pomp and tedious ceremonial of the Spanish court, Rubens was glad to get back

to Mantua early in 1604. In his trying position he had conducted himself with admirable dignity and discretion, and had won the esteem of all with whom he came in contact. He remained at Mantua for two years, and during this time he painted three pictures for the Church of the Trinity there. They are not great works. The handling is coarse; Caravaggio's shadows darken them; many of the figures are borrowed from Raphael and others; but they are a distinct advance on anything that he had done before, and one perceives that here is a strong man who has not yet found the means of self-expression. During this period, too, he continued to copy Titian and Correggio.

In August, 1605, Philip Rubens was appointed Librarian to the Cardinal Ascanio Colonna, and came from Antwerp to assume the duties of his post. This naturally filled his brother with the desire to go to Rome, and shortly afterward Rubens set out for the Eternal City. It was a joyous meeting between the affectionate brothers, who had so many tastes in common. Philip was a distinguished Latin scholar and deeply enamored of classical antiquity. So the brothers spent much time in studying the remains of Roman greatness; and Rubens made many drawings of ancient busts and bas-reliefs. These have now found their way into the Louvre. Despite his slender resources he at this time bought the antique busts of Cicero, Chrysippus and Seneca that formed the nucleus of the fine collection which he subsequently acquired.

He remained in Rome nearly two years, and painted while there an altar-piece for the Chiesa Nuova which posesses no eminent merits. The first picture proving too bright in color for the light in which it was hung, he replaced it by a free copy painted on slate and of a lower tone. He afterwards took the original with him back to Flanders, where he hung it as a votive offering in the church where his mother was buried. After painting this

picture he joined Vincenzo at Genoa, where he painted an altar-piece for the Church of St. Ambrogio, also a moderate performance. In the fall of 1606 he returned to Rome, and here he painted the *St. Sebastian,* now in the Corsini Gallery, where the splendid flesh of the youthful martyr reveals the hand of the mighty master that is yet to emerge from all those futile strivings.

In 1606 Rubens was present at an event that afforded him rare delight — the unearthing in the gardens of the Esquiline of the *Aldobrandini Marriage,* perhaps the most charming picture that has come down to us from Roman days. Now in the Vatican Library, it is a thing of great beauty despite its hasty treatment, and its three hundred years of exposure to the light. In the freshness of its first discovery it must have been rarely lovely. In his last letter to his friend Peiresc, written thirty years afterward, Rubens speaks with enthusiasm of this exquisite work, of which Peiresc had sent him a copy.

If Rubens had painted nothing in Italy except his religious pictures, he could have made no great impression at a time when Guido Reni, Domenichino, Guercino, Caravaggio and other distinguished men were creating works which, if less esteemed than formerly, still delight the eye. Yet as early as 1607 Gaspard Scioppius wrote of him: "My friend Peter Paul Rubens, in whom I know not which to praise the most, his ability in painting, in which he occupies the most exalted rank attained by any man of this century, or his knowledge of literature, or his enlightened taste, and the all too rare agreement between his words and his deeds."

We know, too, that Rubens' fame was at this time so extended that the Archduke Albert earnestly desired his return to Flanders, and wrote the Duke Vincenzo to send him home; and that Vincenzo esteemed his services at so high a rate that he declined the request, preferring to offend a son of the German emperor and his wife, the daughter of

the King of Spain, rather than give up his painter. It is recorded also that when Rubens returned to Antwerp his fame had preceded him and he was greeted as a master.

The sacred pictures that Rubens had painted up to this time could inspire no such enthusiasm. Whence, then, did it spring?

Like most of the gentlemen of his time, Rubens had two religions, that of Christ and that of the Greeks and Romans. His Christianity was sincere, but his adoration of the gods of Greece was not less genuine. His life was to be devoted chiefly to the illustration of two books, the Gospels and the "Metamorphoses" of Ovid. By the natural bent of his exuberant genius he was far closer to the ancient faith with its exultation in the joy and fruitfulness of nature than to the teachings of the Man of Sorrows. Life, not renunciation, was what appealed to him. In later years he was to paint some of the noblest religious pictures in all the world; but in his lusty youth the sad lesson that Christ came to teach made but slight impression on one who looked upon the world and saw that it was good, filled with lovely things and replete with the means of enjoyment. So there welled up in his heart the old pagan love of the beauty of earth and the gladness of living; and he who was later to illustrate the Gospels with surpassing power first showed his genius in displaying the charms of the "Metamorphoses."

Of the pagan pictures that Rubens painted in Italy we have no record. Religious pictures are generally easily traced by the records of churches and monasteries; but the pagan ones were the orders of private individuals, most frequently given by word of mouth, or else were painted by the master for the joy they brought him. Hence there is the greatest difference of opinion as to their dates. M. Max Rooses, who has given his whole life to the study of

Rubens, assigns to his Italian residence some of the finest of his pagan works.

The first of these are supposed to be the *Drunken Hercules* and the *Fame Crowning a Hero,* now at Dresden. They are the beginning of that wonderful series devoted to the glorification of the flesh that constitutes Rubens' most indisputable triumph. The forms are heavy and wanting in refinement; but they have their voluptuous beauty and a vitality which is afterwards to grow more intense, but which already surpasses the power of common men.

The *Romulus and Remus* of the Capitol was also probably painted in Italy. It is Rubens' first known picture of children. It is not equal to many that he was afterward to paint; the colors are a little dry and hard; but still it has an exceeding charm and vitality.

The *Drinking Satyr and Laughing Faun* at Munich, a most vigorous presentation of the animal joy of life, was also the work of these early days. To this period, too, M. Rooses assigns one of Rubens' masterpieces, the *Toilet of Venus* in the Leichenstein Gallery. Seated updraped before her mirror, Venus turns her back to the spectator. Large and opulent in her form, her flesh is yet firm, with none of the fatty degeneration apparent in many of Rubens' later works, and it is molded and realized with convincing power. The superb creature lives and palpitates before our eyes, full of the consciousness of her beauty and of capacity for every joy. She pleases her painter so much that she reappears in many of his pictures. She is seated in the same position watching Fame that crowns the Hero; she is one of the daughters of Cecrops beside the cradle of Erecthonius; she is the Magdalen who receives the feet of Christ as he is lifted from the cross. Everywhere she is superb; everywhere she is strong, voluptuous, beautiful, a thing made for the glory of earth; but nowhere is she so intensely realized as in this first picture. It was evidently

painted from the living model, while the others are probably painted from it.

These early pictures, conspicuous among which is the *Four Quarters of the Globe* at Vienna, are interesting as showing that the love of over-full and voluptuous forms was innate with Rubens, and not the result of his Flemish surroundings. For years he had been in Italy among women of classic grace of proportions. All the Italian painters about him, whose highest aim was ever to paint *un bel corpo ignudo,* were displaying upon the canvas figures that were not unworthy of Grecian days. The models whom Rubens found in the studios were no doubt such as Guido and Carracci loved. Yet he turns from them and seeks women of a riper and more sensual type,— the type to which he adhered to the end. It is not surprising that when Guido Reni saw these pictures, he exclaimed, " Surely this man mixes his colors with blood."

Yet he was not incapable of appreciating less exuberant types of beauty. In the picture at St. Petersburg showing the *River God Tiber* (or Tigris) *and Abundance,* the nymph who faces the spectator and leans gracefully upon the urn whence flows the stream is of an almost classic purity of form, beautifully developed, but without redundancy — a figure that would have delighted the eye of Apelles.

It is remarkable that despite his long residence in Italy the technique of Rubens remained thoroughly Flemish. He imitated the dark shadows of Caravaggio, but he produced them in his own way, with the richness of paint that he had learned in the studios of Van Noort and Van Veen.

On October 26, 1608, while at Rome, Rubens received intelligence that the mother whom he loved so much and whom he had not seen for eight years was stricken with a dangerous illness, and he immediately departed for Antwerp, writing a letter to Vincenzo's minister, promising to

return. News traveled slowly in those days, and the dear old lady had died at the age of seventy-two five days before Rubens learned that she was sick. Of this he knew nothing, and pushed on with post-haste, hoping to embrace her again before her death. When at last he reached her home in the Kloosterstraat, whither she had removed years before from the more pretentious dwelling in the Meir, and found that she had passed away, his grief was poignant.

III

RETURN TO ANTWERP AND FIRST MARRIAGE

Rubens found Philip at Antwerp, occupying the post of municipal secretary, and in high favor with the magistrates. He took up his abode in the Kloosterstraat home. His sister Blandine was dead, and the two brothers, though sustained by their mutual affection, were sad enough as they saw on every hand reminders of the devoted mother who had loved them so much and had made so many sacrifices for their happiness.

At first Rubens contemplated a return to Italy; but wiser counsels finally prevailed. Italy was a decaying country, slowly dying under the bigotry of Spain. In the eight years that he had spent beneath Italian skies, Rubens had learned all that the land could teach him. Flanders, on the other hand, was pulsing with vitality. Under the wise rule of the Archduke Albert, trade had revived. A love for learning and the fine arts had awakened in every breast. Plantin's great printing press was turning out many of the finest books ever printed. Persecution was a thing of the past, and the minds of men, released from the long strain, were filled with the joy of life. The churches which had been desecrated by the iconoclasts demanded the services

of artists to adorn their walls. Many new palaces and religious edifices were being erected. Though the port of Antwerp remained closed, manufactures were reviving the city's prosperity. It would have been madness to leave this scene of buoyant life, to go back to dying Italy. So Rubens was persuaded to remain. Philip used all his influence in his brother's favor. Rubens' own delightful manners, varied culture and handsome person won him the good will of all he met; and he soon found himself in that full tide of fortune that was to experience no ebb until his death.

Like Antæus, Rubens derived new life from contact with his native soil. All his studies of the great masters, which had borne such indifferent fruit beneath Southern skies, now blossomed out into unexampled splendor.

One of his first undertakings was the *Adoration of the Kings* which is now in the Prado. This was painted in 1609 for the City Hall. Rubens afterward surpassed it in splendor; but he alone could do so. Great in size, crowded with figures, with lights and shadows somewhat over-accentuated, there is yet a power in the rendition of the forms, a brilliancy of color, a teeming vitality, which for the first time reveal the mighty master in the plenitude of his strength. When on September 1, 1612, the Count d'Oliva, ambassador extraordinary of the Spanish King, set sail from Antwerp on his return, the city council presented him with this picture, the burgomaster declaring it to be "the rarest and most precious gift in the possession of the magistracy," which was but the truth. Antwerp had never possessed such a treasure. Some years afterward when D'Oliva lost his head, Philip the Fourth added the picture to the royal collection; and on his trip to Spain in 1628 Rubens largely repainted it.

This is a subject that Rubens treated many times, with ever increasing mastery, until he reached the presentation

that adorns the Antwerp Museum; but even in this first great picture there is already conclusive evidence that a star of the first magnitude has swum into our ken.

On September 23, 1609, the Archduke Albert appointed Rubens court painter with a salary of 500 Flemish pounds, exemption from taxation, and the permission to inscribe his pupils in the Guild of St. Luke. This appointment possessed the still greater advantage that it freed Rubens from the vexatious restrictions of the Guild.

The Archduke and his Archduchess, who were far in advance of the bigotry of the time, governed Flanders with great wisdom and justice, granting a measure of tolerance unknown elsewhere in the dominions of Spain; and they would have removed all restrictions on the freedom of religious worship had the courts of Madrid and Rome permitted. This was the more exemplary because they were themselves devoted Catholics. They interested themselves in every movement for the development of their states, and were pleased to mingle in the public festivals. They loved the honest Flemish people, and they were warmly loved in return.

They soon perceived that Rubens' gifts as a man were equal to his genius as an artist; and they did all in their power to attract him to their court. The Archduke learned that none of his ministers was better capable of advising him on affairs of state, and he discussed the most serious matters with his painter. He would have been glad to persuade Rubens to take up his abode at Brussels; but the latter was attached to the city where he had made his home, and he felt that nowhere else could he pursue his labors to such advantage; for at Antwerp, not at Brussels, were assembled the artists of Flanders.

In 1609, Rubens was admitted to the Guild of the Romanists, composed of artists and scholars who had resided in Italy. Here he found the same spirit of humanistic cul-

ture, the same love of antiquity, of the art and literature of Greece and Rome, that had reigned in Italy in the days of Lorenzo de' Medici. The spirit of the Renaissance, that joy in the beauty of this world and that love for "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome," which was dying out in the South, was strong in the breasts of the cultured men of Flanders. In the Guild Rubens found friends who shared all his tastes and enthusiasms, and the esteem in which he was held is shown by his election as president when he had been but four years a member.

Already a prosperous man, on October 3, 1609, Rubens married Isabella Brant, daughter of Jan Brant, the city registrar, and a niece of Philip's wife. Though already thirty-two, Rubens was just on the threshold of his career. Isabella was eighteen, fresh, sweet-tempered, fair to look upon, intelligent, a good housewife, devoted to her handsome and accomplished husband, admirably suited to create about him that atmosphere of peace and comfort in which his genius could best develop. Rubens, on his part, was the most loving and considerate of husbands, kind, gentle, affectionate, one who found all his happiness in his home. It is strange that the man whose art is the supreme apotheosis of the power and the joy of the flesh should have been a model of the domestic virtues. Looking at Rubens' pictures, one would imagine him a profligate and a wassailer, when in fact he was a man of most regular and honorable life, who spent his days in work and his nights in the bosom of his family. The marriage, which was to bring so much happiness to both, took place in the abbey church of St. Michael, the church where reposed the body of Rubens' mother.

Shortly after his marriage Rubens painted the delightful group at Munich, his wife sitting at his feet, her hand upon his, while he inclines lovingly toward her. It is

springtime in nature as in their hearts, and the flowers are in bloom about them.

Already the powers of the master must have been generally recognized; for on May 11, 1610, Rubens had written a letter that has come down to us, declining to accept a new pupil on the ground that his atelier was already over-crowded, and saying that he had already turned away more than a hundred applicants, though many of them had been recommended by great personages or by his closest friends.

On June 10, 1610, Rubens began a work which was to proclaim him a master without a rival among the painters of his day. He was afterward to paint many works greater than the *Elevation of the Cross;* but its prodigious force announced the arrival of a titan in the realm of art. The powerful figure of Christ nailed to the cross might well serve for Prometheus chained to the rocks of Caucasus; but instead of the defiance and hate on the face of the Greek demi-god, Christ looks up to heaven with an expression of supreme resignation. Indeed this face is the most Christ-like of all that Rubens painted. Rubens has chosen the moment when the cross is half-way raised. It cuts diagonally across the picture with tragic intensity, and the strong men are straining every muscle to lift the mighty burden. There are dark shadows and fierce high-lights, and the color is not fused as in Rubens' later works; but the anatomy is worthy of Michelangelo, and the flesh painting is already wonderful. We stand in the presence of a masterpiece. Painted for the church of St. Walburga, it now hangs in the cathedral at Antwerp.

Rubens on his marriage went to live with his father-in-law; but by January 4, 1611, he was already in such prosperous circumstances that he was able to pay 7,600 florins for the handsome house with extensive grounds on the Wapper in the center of the town, which was to be his

principal home for the rest of his days, and which, cut in two and sadly mutilated, still survives. Nor was he content with the mansion as it stood. He proceeded to make many additions and improvements, erecting large studios in connection with it, and adorning it in sumptuous style, so that it was not until the beginning of 1616 that he took possession. The improvements which he put upon the house and grounds far exceeded the original cost.

On August 26, 1611, Rubens suffered a bitter sorrow. His beloved brother Philip, to whom he had been so closely united by a congeniality of tastes, passed away. He was accorded a splendid funeral; and a touch of the manners of the time is revealed in the fact that there was spent on the funeral banquet as much as it had cost to support Philip's entire household for four months. The dead man was greatly esteemed by his fellow citizens. Many addresses were delivered, and these, along with a selection of Philip's writings, were preserved in a handsomely printed volume. It must be said, however, that while everything that Rubens wrote is a model of clearness and good taste, the compositions of Philip are characterized by the stilted and artificial style then in vogue.

Shortly after Philip's death, and no doubt in loving memory, Rubens painted the delightful group in the Pitti known as the *Philosophers,* representing Philip with his master, the great jurist Justus Lipsius, and his beloved fellow-pupil, Jan van der Wouwere, while Rubens himself is seen in the background. M. Rooses and others attribute this picture to Rubens' Italian days; but the masterly execution and Rubens' mature appearance, together with the fact that he is already growing bald, indicate that it was painted after the return to Antwerp; an opinion shared by M. Michel and others equally competent to judge.

Philip's death added to Rubens' cares. He became the guardian of the orphaned children, and the guardianship of

the children of his sister Blandine, in which Philip had shared, now devolved on him alone. We may be sure that he assumed his new burdens without reluctance, and that he discharged them in an exemplary manner.

Philip's eldest son, who bore his name and shared his scholarly tastes, afterwards repaid Rubens' care by writing of him a Latin biography, to which we are indebted for many details of the master's life.

The Guild of Arquebusiers, of which Rubens' friend the Burgomaster Rockox, a most learned and accomplished gentleman, was the president, desired an altar-piece for the cathedral; and on September 12, 1611, they gave to Rubens the order that was to produce one of the great masterpieces of religious painting. As Leonardo's *Last Supper* is the one presentment that arises before the mind's eye whenever the subject is mentioned, so Rubens' *Descent from the Cross* enjoys an equal preëminence among pictures dealing with its theme. He afterwards painted better, with a more supple handling, a more delightful fusing of colors, a clearer brilliance; but already the technique is masterly, while the composition is supremely perfect. How like a dead thing the beautiful body sinks from the cross! With what loving reverence is it handled by all, from the strong men upon the ladders to the beautiful Magdalen who kneels to receive the feet! What faultless unity in feeling and action! What admirable restraint in the expression of sorrow! In the perfection of its solemn harmony it is like the *Largo* of Handel. The sky is overcast, but a miraculous light that comes we know not whence, illumines the body of the Christ and aids in making it the picture's center.

This masterpiece placed Rubens at once in a position apart, as beyond comparison the greatest painter of his time. It made such an impression that he had to paint six other pictures of the same subject; none of which, however, equals the first. It also resulted in such vast numbers of

commissions that Rubens had to set up his great manufactory of pictures, the most extensive thing of the kind known to history.

In these days a picture is expected to be only a work of art for its own sake and to be painted by a single hand. In those days pictures were looked upon as parts of decorative schemes. The object was only to make something beautiful, and the collaboration of pupils and assistants was the rule rather than the exception. But no one ever carried this system so far as Rubens, nor with such success. He gathered around him great numbers of pupils and assistants. He studied them all, and perceived unerringly for what each was best fitted. He designed the pictures, and put his pupils at work painting the background and accessories, reserving usually the principal personages for his own brush. Many of these assistants could do the humbler parts entrusted to them almost as well as the master himself; and so Rubens was enabled to turn out an incredible number of pictures all stamped with the mark of his genius. More than twelve hundred works, most of them of large dimensions, emanated from his busy workshop. Many of these were painted by his own hand alone; many were made by pupils from his designs; but in the great majority master and pupils collaborated. This system was a great blessing to the world. In this way all the galleries of Europe from Madrid to St. Petersburg are filled with gorgeous masterpieces that are for all practical purposes as good as if Rubens' hand alone had touched them.

This enormous output was rendered possible only by Rubens' intensely creative imagination. He thought in pictures. When he read his favorite authors the events they portrayed stood forth before his mind's eye as in a tableau, and with a few masterly strokes he made his assistants comprehend his idea. His own method of painting, too, was characterized by a greater economy of labor than

that of any other artist. He could do more with a certain number of brush-strokes than any of his rivals. Yet he painted finished pictures, not sketches. The point in which he differs from all competitors is this — his pictures are seen to best advantage in their details at the precise distance at which they are best grasped as a whole. There is no sacrifice of the details, as in so many modern productions; but they are so broadly rendered that they are fully perceived only when one stands far enough away to comprehend the painting in its entirety. This marvelous intuition enabled him to work rapidly and with extreme effectiveness.

In the conduct of the business Rubens was scrupulously honest. When the picture was ordered he stipulated what part should be done by his own hand, and charged in proportion to the amount of his own work, at the rate, it is said, of 100 florins a day. If he sold a picture, the purchaser was informed what portion of it he had painted, what had been done by his assistants.

One result of his system was that he was punctual in his dealings with his patrons to a degree scarcely known among artists. When he promised that a work should be done at a given time, it was promptly finished. Tirelessly industrious himself and most methodical in all he did, he was able to instil into all about him the same habits of regular industry.

Usually he preferred to paint on boards covered with a grayish white plaster. On this he would sketch in the composition in brown. His assistants would paint the parts that suited their talents best, and then he would come, and with a marvelous and unequaled economy of labor, paint the chief personages, and with a few masterly strokes of the brush sweep the whole composition into faultless unity, so that no trace of the diverse origin remained.

His choice of wood is justified by the results. Owing

perhaps to the plaster coating, his pictures on wood have as a rule a greater brilliance of color than those he painted on canvas.

The carrying on of such a factory is a work of supreme difficulty. Artists are sensitive and high-strung; apt to be jealous of one another and intolerant of control. But Rubens, like Raphael, was able by his tact, his kindness, his justice and his generous praise of deserving work, to attach all his assistants to him with ties of admiration and affection, and to procure their harmonious coöperation. All of them were glad to subordinate themselves to the master, and to work out his designs in letter and in spirit. From this time the productions of Rubens' studio are so numerous that we can mention only the most important, which stand out as mile-stones on his triumphant progress.

Not only was Rubens kind to his pupils and assistants; he was equally kind to all his brother artists. He visited their studios, encouraged them with discriminating praise, gave them advice so tactfully that none was offended, and, if they requested it, he would even take up the brush and with a stroke of genius give life to their compositions. Owing to his influence peace and good-will reigned supreme among the painters of his city. All of them loved him, and all were glad to collaborate with him in the production of any work. Foremost among them was Snyders, perhaps the greatest master in the painting of wild animals, who often coöperated with Rubens, painting the wild beasts and the landscape, while the master made the figures. Two years younger than Rubens, he was working with him as early as 1616, and had then painted the eagle in Rubens' *Prometheus*. Like all of Rubens' friends, he was devoted to the end, and was named one of the executors of Rubens' will. Their styles agreed so completely that the result of their collaboration is perfect harmony. Perhaps

the most marvelous result of their coöperation is the Medusa at Vienna, painted in imitation of the one ascribed to Leonardo in the Uffizi, but surpassing that and all else in its gruesome horror.

Rubens was Snyders' equal in the rendition of animals. He painted many with a skill that Snyders never surpassed. It is recorded that once he had a strolling lion-tamer bring his beast into his studio, and offered him a large sum to make the brute open his mouth by tickling him under the chin. But the king of beasts resented such familiarity, and was with difficulty restrained from devouring his host. This was probably while Rubens was painting the *Lion Hunt* at Munich. But Rubens' rule was to do nothing that others could do as well; and so he availed himself freely of Snyders' services in painting the animals, plants, fruits and backgrounds, reserving for himself the human figure, in whose treatment none of his pupils could compare with him.

Another leading painter of the time, who often cooperated with Rubens, was "Velvet" Brueghel. It must have been mutual affection that brought them together, for two men could not be farther apart in their technical processes. The vigorous, broadly painted figures of Rubens are strangely out of place in Brueghel's dainty landscapes. In the *Earthly Paradise* at the Hague the great man toned his style down to its surroundings and painted as daintily as Brueghel himself; but the result is far from satisfactory. Instead of raising Brueghel, he merely sinks to the latter's level. Brueghel and Rubens were fast friends to the end, and Rubens was one of the guardians of Brueghel's children.

The most esteemed of all the master's assistants was Anton van Dyck. Of an aristocratic Antwerp family, he came into Rubens' studio in 1618 at the age of nineteen, and remained with him for three years. He so perfectly

assimilated the style of his master that it is usually difficult and sometimes impossible to distinguish the works that he painted under Rubens' influence from those of the master himself. Of late it has been the fashion to take pictures from Rubens and assign them to Van Dyck until there have been attributed to the younger man more than fifty portraits that issued from Rubens' studio, besides a great number of religious and mythological pieces; an amount of work, in fact, that Briareus could not have done within the three years if he had held a brush in each hand. Still, while such attributions lead to manifest absurdity, it is certain that the gifted and facile pupil was of immense assistance to the master.

During the eighteenth century someone invented the unjust story that Rubens sent Van Dyck away from motives of jealousy. Nothing could be farther from the truth. In his commanding position Rubens could have had no cause to be jealous of any man. On the contrary, he was never tired of praising Van Dyck; and when he advised him to go to Italy, it was because he felt that he had taught him all he could, and that in Italy alone, whose treasures had not then suffered the wide dispersal that modern times have brought, could the young man attain his full development. And he was right. It was in Italy and in the school of Titian that Van Dyck became the master that we know. When they parted Rubens gave him his finest horse and letters to his influential friends beyond the Alps, while Van Dyck presented his master with a beautiful portrait of Isabella Brant.

Rubens stood so high in favor that the Archduke Albert acted as god-father to his first son, bestowing upon the infant his own name.

It was his own children that gave Rubens his joy in the painting of infancy. The *Garland of Fruit* at Munich, the *Infant Christ and St. John with two Infant Angels* at Ber-

lin, and the *Jesus playing with St. John* at Vienna are perhaps the most delightful of these; but they are to be seen everywhere, babies beautiful as the morning, radiant in their exuberant health, pulsing with the joy of awakening life. Raphael's infants are more spiritual, those of Titian have a more perfect grace of form; but no one has equaled Rubens in depicting the gladness of childhood or the satiny sheen of infant flesh.

Rubens was the man for the hour. The Jesuits, with their accustomed sagacity, were among the first to perceive that the time for persecution had passed, that the world was disgusted with the fagot and the stake, so that for each heretic burned ten good Catholics were alienated from the Church. So they turned to win the hearts of men, and to make the services alluring to the senses and to the soul. They built gorgeous churches, which they filled with pictures equally gorgeous, with richest music and the smoke of incense. Highly cultivated, they led in the study of the classics, and the spirit of humanism penetrated their sermons. Rubens, who had always stood well with their society, was the only man who could paint pictures entirely suited to their purpose, imposing in dimensions, rich in color, animated in action, noble and elevated in sentiment, but withal most human. A good Catholic, his kind and generous heart rebelled against the spirit of persecution; and he was the ablest of all the assistants of the Jesuits in their efforts to allure the world back into the bosom of the faith. For the Jesuits Rubens painted many pictures, conspicuous among which are the *Miracles of St. Ignatius* and the *Miracles of St. Francis Xavier,* which are now at Vienna. In the first of these are people sick with epilepsy and hysteria painted with such discernment that Drs. Charcot and Richer declare that they reveal the deeper characteristics of those maladies discovered by modern science.

For his friend the Burgomaster Rockox, who presented

it to the church of the Recollets, Rubens painted what some consider the greatest of his religious works, the *Coup de Lance,* now in the Antwerp Gallery. The majestic figure of Christ hanging from the cross bathed in the full light of the setting sun, the mounted centurion who, turning his back to the light, buries his lance in the Saviour's side; the despairing gesture of the beautiful Magdalen kneeling at the foot of the cross in pathetic protest against this final desecration; the crucified thieves, the weeping Marys, all combine to make a work of surpassing dignity and power. Unhappily it is now so hung that one cannot get far enough away to see it properly.

In the *Communion of St. Francis,* also in the same Museum, Rubens showed that he could, without loss of effect, dispense with the bright colors that he loved. Its tones are somber and brown, almost monochrome, but it is a great work, full of power and pathos.

Another of his religious pictures that must be mentioned is his *St. Ambrose refusing Admittance to the Church at Milan to the Emperor Theodosius after the Massacre at Salonica.* It is an admirable expression of the superiority of spiritual to earthly power. Majestic in archiepiscopal robes, the saint with noble dignity repulses the monarch stained with his people's blood, and the proud and warlike ruler surrounded by his soldiers and chieftains bows in penitent submission.

There were also a great many pictures of the Madonna, in which his wife often figures, either as the Mother of God or as an attendant saint, while the painter's sons, Albert and Nicholas, figure as Christ and John the Baptist.

Of all his religious pictures the most perfect is the *St. Ildefonso Altar-piece* at Vienna, showing the Madonna giving the chasuble to St. Ildefonso while the Archduke and Archduchess kneel on either side. In the glory of its color, the softness of its handling, the harmony of its composi-

tion, the grace and dignity of the attitudes, it stands supreme. It is evident that in this tribute to the rulers to whom he owed so much the master has done his best to prove his gratitude.

Another great masterpiece is his *Conversion of St. Paul* at Berlin. In its vitality, in the wild excitement of the rearing horses, in its rich color, it is truly splendid. It is scarcely a religious picture at all; but its intense action and the sense of overflowing energy that fills it make it a thing for deepest admiration. Still further removed from the Christian spirit is his beautiful *Magdalen* in the same gallery. Here all semblance of religious feeling has disappeared. The saint is but a pagan Venus, the attendant angels are only cupids; but he is indeed a bigot who would have it otherwise, so lovely is the work.

It is astonishing what a number of these vast and admirable compositions Rubens was able to turn out. Only the most indefatigable industry and a mastery of the brush that enabled him to produce his effects with fewer strokes than any other painter, could accomplish this result. His pictures are not merely immense sketches where every brush-stroke shows, like most of the religious paintings of Tintoretto and a great part of the most esteemed works of to-day. They are finished to an ultimate perfection, leaving nothing to be supplied, but with incredible economy of labor. With amazing virtuosity a single stroke does the work of ten.

On September 13, 1621, Rubens wrote to William Trumbull, James I's diplomatic agent in Flanders, "I confess that I am by natural instinct more fitted to execute works of large size than little curiosities. Everyone according to his lights; my talent is such that my courage has ever been equal to any enterprise, however vast in size or diversified in subject."

The last words express a truth that is conspicuous.

No painter ever handled large masses of figures with such effectiveness. All remain individual, with a separate interest, yet all blend together to produce the general effect.

Sometimes he carries this to an extreme, as in the large *Fall of the Rebel Angels* and *Last Judgment,* at Munich, painted by his pupils after his designs, or in the smaller but far more powerful *Last Judgment* and *Fall of the Damned* in the same gallery, which were painted by his own hand. The anatomical knowledge, the power of foreshortening, the grasp of the attitudes of men and women falling through the air, and struggling as they fall, are in these latter compositions beyond all praise. As we look at it we think that *The Fall of the Damned* is the most terrible picture ever painted. All these men and women hurled by St. Michael toward the abyss of hell, seized by demons who torture them and drag them down, writhing in every contortion of agony, their faces and every attitude revealing the intensity of their unspeakable suffering and despair, shock, repel and fascinate like the " Inferno " of Dante. We look at them and turn shuddering away, only to return again. Despite the vast number of figures the impression is one of unity; for, pulled hither and thither by the demons, they fall in groups that relieve the composition of confusion and lend it a certain coherence. Owing to his love of the nude female figure, the master inserts into the picture a number of women unusual in such representations; so that here, as in life, they can complain that man's love has done them wrong.

Yet the small *Last Judgment* is more terrible still. It is but another version of the *Fall of the Damned,* for the assumption of the just occupies but a small part of the canvas and is scarcely noticed. In this picture the motion is still more violent. The wretches falling to earth, to be dragged into hell, whose lurid flames light up the lower right

hand corner, struggle and fight to save themselves from their fearful doom. The presentation of souls and bodies in agony can go no farther. Less grand than Michelangelo's titanic version of the subject, it is more human, and arouses a deeper sympathy. We feel that these voluptuous forms, whose sin has been perhaps only an excess of earthly joy, can suffer in their soft flesh with unutterable intensity. Our hearts go out to them. Their sins are not depicted. We only see men and women falling through the air, clutching wildly to save themselves, vainly striving to beat back the pursuing fiends, sinking to a doom that no guilt could merit.

In hunting scenes Rubens has no rival. The excitement and tumult of the chase are depicted with a power that no one else ever attained. Whether the object of pursuit be a lion, a wild boar, a wolf or a hippopotamus, the conflict of armed men with ferocious beasts was never represented with such intensity and force. Perhaps his masterpiece in this line is the *Lion Hunt* at Munich, second only to Leonardo's *Battle of the Standard* in depicting the ferocity of the fight to death.

Meanwhile, Rubens was turning out a number of remarkable portraits. Perhaps the most popular of all is the *Chapeau de Poil* of the National Gallery, which represents Susanna Fourment, whose youngest sister was to be Rubens' second wife. In her luscious beauty and in the sweet candor of her virgin face she is altogether lovely. Another great portrait of these earlier days is the *Jacqueline de Cordes* in the Brussels Gallery; a great dame and a beautiful woman of a high-born delicacy and refinement, painted with exquisite charm and distinction.

The most characteristic of Rubens' works are the pictures inspired by that classical mythology of which he was so fond. They are innumerable, *Perseus and Andromeda*, and the *Neptune and Amphitrite* at Berlin, the *Four Quar-*

ters of the Globe, and the *Erecthonius and the Daughters of Cecrops* at Vienna, the *Venus and Adonis* of the Uffizi, and countless others. All are remarkable for their marvelous painting of flesh that gleams and palpitates in the light, for the voluptuous fullness of the female forms, for their delight in the joy of living. They are the most sensuous pictures ever painted, but there is in them nothing immoral. Immorality implies something morbid and unwholesome, while these pictures are running over with buoyant health. It is the animal in man, but it is the healthy, wholesome animal enraptured with existence. Perhaps the most delightful of these is the *Castor and Pollux carrying off the Daughters of Leucippus,* at Munich. The forms here are not redundant; in fact, they are almost faultless in their proportions, while the flesh-painting is of superb perfection. And while we are speaking of flesh-painting, let us not forget the wonderful shoulders and bosom of the Magdalen in *Christ and the Repentant Sinners,* also at Munich, so exquisitely beautiful in their satiny sheen that words are powerless to describe them.

It was in the earlier days that Rubens painted those effects of artificial light in the style that Elsheimer had rendered popular, and which showed that Rubens could have surpassed Hornthorst in his chosen field had he so desired. The *Old Woman with a Candle,* the *Old Woman with a Brasier,* the *Venus Warming Herself,* and above all, the exquisitely lovely *Flight into Egypt* at Cassel, where the light emanates from the Divine Child and contrasts with the light of fading day, are marvels in their kind. But color, not light, was Rubens' chosen field; and usually he is content with daylight effects, using the light only to heighten the brilliancy of his hues.

Early in 1616 he moved into the stately home which he had been so long preparing, and thenceforth his life was

princely. An able man of business, systematic and orderly, he kept within his means; but the earnings of his brush were so great that his revenues were more than sufficient for all his requirements. His treasures of art rapidly increased. In 1618 he acquired the extensive collection of Greek and Roman antiquities belonging to Sir Dudley Carlton, English ambassador at The Hague, paying for them chiefly with his own paintings. His gallery of Italian pictures grew to be one of the most remarkable ever assembled by a private individual. It embraced nineteen pictures by Titian, seventeen by Tintoretto, seven by Paul Veronese, four by Raphael, twenty-two by Bassano, and many more besides. Most of these have passed to the Imperial Gallery at Vienna, and constitute an important part of that collection. And it was not the Italians alone who pleased him. There were also many pictures by Van Dyck, Holbein and other Northern masters. His collection became so extensive that he was compelled to erect in the garden a large circular building lighted from the top, like the Pantheon, so that they might be seen to advantage.

Naturally the home of Rubens became the show-place of Antwerp. All distinguished visitors were conducted there, to see the wonderful collection of masterpieces, the splendid mansion, and, above all, its noble owner, who rejoiced to receive his guests, and who kept on at his work while engaged in pleasant converse.

A great reader, he accumulated an extensive library in many languages, a library which embraced a vast variety of subjects, covering the whole field of science, philosophy, literature and art. He was particularly fond of the Latin classics and of works on Greek and Roman archeology. His books finally became so numerous that he was obliged to construct a building especially to contain them. He also built another very large apartment lighted from the top where his pupils and assistants labored. With

so many pictures always on the easel, he required extensive studio room, and this was liberally provided.

In his garden he took especial delight, filling it with rare flowers and plants and beautiful trees, adorning it with a handsome pavilion, where in summer he used to spend much time with his friends.

The ordering of his life was admirable. He arose early, De Piles says, at four o'clock, which seems improbable, heard mass, breakfasted with continental simplicity, and painted until noon, when he dined with his family. Then he went back to work, and painted until five; at which hour he mounted one of his magnificent Andalusian horses, and rode out into the country. At supper, which was simple, he generally had guests. His conversation was delightful, but serious. Gossip and frivolity were ignored. His friends were men chosen for their culture and wisdom, who had much to say that was worth while, and knew how to say it; and no matter what their language might be, the master of the house could converse with them in their own tongue, or could join them in Latin, then the universal language of the learned. His voice was remarkably pleasant. He spoke fluently, but with calmness and self-restraint.

He had a wonderful memory, and could quote long passages from Virgil and other favorite authors. While he painted he usually had someone read to him, most frequently from some Latin author. He was amazingly versatile. In 1621 Dr. Otto Sperling visited him, and he writes that when he entered he found Rubens at work at his easel, while a person was reading to him from Tacitus and Rubens was dictating a letter. Rubens entertained his guests, continuing his work and finishing the dictation of the letter in the pauses of the conversation, while the reading went on. The Marquis Spinola, he who occupies the chief position in Velasquez's *Surrender of Breda,* declared

that Rubens possessed so many merits than in his opinion painting was the least of them all.

His friend de Piles wrote of him: "The qualities with which nature had endowed him and the virtues which he acquired gave him the esteem and affection of all who knew him. He was of large stature, commanding presence, and his features were well formed and regular. His cheeks were ruddy, his hair auburn, his eyes bright, but not piercing, his countenance smiling, agreeable and open. His manners were engaging, his humor easy, his conversation apt, his wit sparkling and keen, his fashion of speaking dignified, and the sound of his voice most agreeable; all of which natural charms made him most eloquent and persuasive."

Fortunately, Rubens, though a modest man, delighted, like many other artists, to paint his own portrait, so that we have many likenesses of him, and know how he looked at every period of his life. We see him pass from youth into maturity, from maturity to the beginning of life's decline. At every stage the face is handsome, refined, kindly, the face of a gentleman and a scholar who is also an accomplished man of the world. When we look at this face we find it difficult to believe that this accomplished gentleman could be the author of those "banquets of the flesh" which are his most characteristic productions and his surest passport to immortality. Others may paint Madonnas and Saints and Christs that are as noble as his; but no one else can approach him in revealing the power of the flesh, its capacity for life and joy. Many are revolted by these works, full of a sensuality far exceeding anything that pagan art has left us; but others equally pure find in them no offense, only the apotheosis of the animal in the healthy man and woman.

The pictures in which this disposition is most overwhelming are his *Processions of Silenus.* The god, a great

fat drunkard in a state of beastly intoxication, staggers on, supported by nymphs and satyrs, all exhilarated with the juice of the vine. Many persons have suggested that Rubens painted these as a protest against drunkenness, just as Zola wrote "L'Assommoir," and Hogarth painted *The Rake's Progress.* Nothing could be farther from the truth. In those days, when the use of strong drink was universal and its abuse a matter of every day occurrence, drunkenness was regarded with indulgence. It is impossible to look at these pictures without perceiving that Rubens painted them *con amore,* just as Ostade or Teniers painted their drunken boors. That he did not paint them with any idea of reprobation is apparent from the fact that he introduces his own wife and children among the followers of the tipsy god. He looked upon the scene as a Greek would look upon the Bacchic revels, and delighted in the joy that the Wine-God brought. His female satyrs with their legs terminating in the shanks of a goat, supporting their drunken lord, following in his wake, or suckling their goat-footed progeny in attitudes of animal abandon, are supremely gross. Yet truly they are magnificent in the intensity of their vital force, in the joy that life brings them — life, which to the most of us is but a pallid and voiceless existence. Sensual as these pictures are, they are supremely healthy. They are an apotheosis of the flesh and its appetites raised to a degree of intensity far above the capacity of ordinary mortals to reach; but there is in it all nothing morbid, nothing that is depraved.

Rubens enjoyed a fame so universal that no activity with the brush, even assisted by his crowd of disciples, could satisfy the demands for works by his hand. Every one was clamoring for his pictures. He embodied the very soul of his age,— its love for beauty, its sensuality, its fondness for classic mythology, its reverence for a religion of stately ceremonial and decorative splendor. So, in order

to bring his productions within the reach of all he had recourse to the arts of the engraver. For this purpose he would make sketches of his pictures in black and white, and turn them over to be reproduced. It does not appear that the engraver ever drew from the original painting. It was on Sundays and feast days that Rubens did this work. With his amazing facility he could turn off these drawings with unparalleled rapidity. The proceeds of his engravings he devoted to the purchase of books. This was his library fund, and it was very large. Not only were his engravings immensely popular, but he was the first man to enjoy international copyright. He had at the courts of Europe so many influential friends that in 1619 he got his engravings protected in Flanders and in France and in 1620 in Holland. Further to secure himself against piracy, he dedicated his plates to distinguished men, who thus felt in honor bound to maintain his rights. In pursuing offenders Rubens, always an admirable man of business, was active and watchful, so that the sale of his engravings brought him a considerable income. Further to popularize his works he had a number of cheap wood-cuts struck off, that brought them within the reach even of the poor.

However excellent may be these reproductions, they give no idea of Rubens' genius. His was a genius for color, and the black and white only preserves his forms, usually uncouth and heavy, and the frigid allegories in which the age delighted. Only he who beholds the originals in all their surpassing splendor can comprehend his position among the few supreme masters of his craft. Of colors so brilliant, of flesh painted with such skill that it shines and palpitates as if alive, no copy can give a conception. Some artists one can understand in one's library. Rubens can only be comprehended in the great galleries of Europe.

It is supposed that he engraved a few plates himself, to learn how it was done; but practically he left the work to

other hands. Many engravers were in his service. With one of the best of these, Vorsterman, the master had the only misunderstanding that he is ever recorded to have had with any assistant in his labors. Vorsterman was so intoxicated with the success of the engravings that he concluded that the whole merit was his, forgetting that he only did the mechanical labor of transferring to the plate the drawings that Rubens made for his use. As the world saw in the engravings only the immortal works of the master, and ignored the hand that held the graver, Vorsterman came to think that Rubens was robbing him of wealth and fame. He finally grew insane and threatened the master's life, so that Rubens' friends urged him to have the lunatic locked up. The master, however, declined to invoke the protection of the law, and finally Vorsterman wandered off.

Vorsterman was succeeded by Paul du Pont, called Pontius after the Latinizing fashion of the day; and then came the brothers Bolswert, one of whom died in 1634, while the other served Rubens to the end. These were admirable masters of their craft, who managed to give in black and white some idea of the rich tones of the pictures, or rather, of Rubens' admirable drawings. Besides these there were many other engravers of less note. The master's marvelous facility enabled him to turn off in his few leisure hours drawings enough to keep many busy with the stylus.

One of the fashions of the day was to insert into books a frontispiece setting forth in allegorical fashion the subject with which it dealt. Of these Rubens produced a great many. His fertility in allegory was unlimited, if not always in good taste. In applying for such a frontispiece the Jesuit Father Bauhusius well said that the illustrations to a volume "are a recreation for the reader, a bait for the purchaser, and, without much increasing the cost, an ornament to the book." However, if Rubens had nothing to

commend him save these frontispieces with their frigid conceits, he would justly be voted a bore.

In 1621 the good Archduke passed away, and the sovereignty of the land fell upon the Archduchess alone. They had ruled together in admirable concord; but of the two hers was the stronger mind, and the land suffered nothing by the change. Though the daughter of the most cruel bigot that ever sat upon a throne, of the man who caused untold thousands to perish for their faith in slow agony at the stake, and though she was so religious that after her husband's death she usually dressed as a nun, she was wise and tolerant, and the fires of persecution were not lighted by her. She had the greatest confidence in Rubens, and frequently called him to her councils. In 1624, at her request, the King of Spain granted him a patent of Nobility.

In January, 1622, Rubens undertook one of the greatest schemes of decoration that any painter has ever achieved. After the death of Henry IV, his widow Marie de' Medici built the Luxembourg for her residence, imitating in its architecture, as well as she could, the Pitti palace, her childhood's home. She wished to adorn it with pictures laudatory of her career; and Rubens was already so preëminently the master-painter of the age that her thoughts naturally turned to him. Besides, she was no doubt reminded of the mighty Fleming by her sister Eleanora of Mantua, with whom she kept up most affectionate relations and a close correspondence. So Rubens was employed, and produced the great series that now adorns the Louvre.

It was a hard task that was set before the painter. Marie's life had been sordid and ignoble. Her marriage had been without love and full of quarrels. Her regency had brought her no glory, and since her son Louis XIII had reached an age to rule, her time had been spent in unworthy intrigues against his government and open dissension with him. There were no illustrious actions, no stir-

ring events to record; while few episodes in her career could be touched upon without giving offense to her son and to Richelieu, his all powerful minister. So the only escape from an intolerable situation was to fall back on allegory and classical mythology. This Rubens did with admirable results.

The pictures cannot be classed among his most pleasing compositions. It is evident that he is working by command, making the most he can of an unworthy subject. It is the spirit of the courtier that animates them, not the genius of untrammeled artistic creation. Still, no one could have done so much with such a theme. In splendor of color they are supreme, while the rendering of the nude figures of the gods is superb. The glorious Apollo is not unworthy to stand beside his matchless fellow of the Belvedere. The female forms are, as usual, less refined and more sensual than those of the men; but with what an exuberance of buoyant life are they endowed! These wonderful nudes bear the impress of the master's own hand, and while in so vast a series the assistance of many disciples was essential, the composition was his, and many, perhaps a majority, of the figures, felt the touch of his life-giving brush.

In three years the immense task was done. To escape the intrigues, gossip and dissension of the French court, Rubens did the work at Antwerp; but when they were nearly finished, he carried the pictures to Paris, and completed them in their places in the Luxembourg. Here the Queen Mother became infatuated with the conversation of the courtly painter, and spent the greater part of her time talking with Rubens while he worked. In this way the artist learned much that was of service to his own ruler, the Infanta Isabella.

On one of the visits to Paris which this undertaking entailed, Rubens met the Duke of Buckingham, who ruled

England in such a reckless manner as the irresponsible minister of Charles I, and painted his portrait. Rubens' drawing at Vienna is a wonderfully life-like presentation of a wonderfully handsome man, whose activities should have been confined to the courts of love.

While in Paris on the several visits necessitated by this great undertaking, Rubens met two eminent French scholars and statesmen, who were to become his most active correspondents, Claude Fabri de Peiresc and Pierre Dupuis. For many years he continued to exchange letters with them, usually in Italian, sometimes in French, with a plentiful admixture of Latin that would now be an affectation, but which was natural in men with whom the language of Virgil was almost as their native tongue. Some of these letters have been preserved, and they bring much honor to Rubens. His diction is clear and elegant, free from the affectations of the time, while his scholarship is as conspicuous as his urbanity. The sentiments expressed are uniformly just, and his views are enlightened, even when judged by the standards of our time. The subjects most frequently treated are archeology and politics. In the former field Rubens was a master, profoundly versed in all that was then known of the life and art of the ancients. His political ideas are so far above those of the rulers of his time that we are compelled to reflect how much happier the world would have been if this King of Painters had sat upon an earthly throne.

Sincerely religious and attentive to all the services of the Church, Rubens was yet free from the prevailing superstition. It was an age in which religious wars had so heated the minds of men that miracles were an every day occurrence; but in his letters Rubens treats these with philosophic incredulity; his faith was animated by an enlightened and tolerant spirit.

His letters show a graceful modesty. Rarely does he

speak of himself, and then without boasting. We can only regret the absence of a vanity which might have preserved for us so many interesting details of his life.

Rubens wrote only one formal essay that has come down to us, his treatise on the "Imitation of Statues." No one, not even Lessing in his "Laocöon," has better expressed the difference between painting and sculpture, or better explained the advantages and the dangers attendant on the study of antique marbles. Nothing is more illuminating than his contrasting of the noble forms of the ancients, perfected by daily exercise in the open air untrammeled by burdensome clothing, with the degenerate forms of the men and women of his days, where through ages of sedentary life the legs and arms have grown flabby, the paunch protuberant.

On February 22, 1622, shortly after making the acquaintance of Rubens, Peiresc wrote to their common friend Gevaert: "I cannot sufficiently praise Rubens' courtesy, or worthily celebrate his lofty virtue, great learning and marvelous knowledge of antiquity, or his rare skill in worldly affairs, the excellence of his hand, or the great charm of his conversation, which, during his short visit to Paris, afforded me the pleasantest entertainment that I have enjoyed for a long time."

A year later Rubens suffered a great loss. His daughter Clara, his eldest child, died on March 21, 1623. The most affectionate of parents, Rubens felt the blow keenly.

Three years later, a still greater calamity befell him; Isabella Brant, his loving and faithful companion, who had made his home so happy, passed away. Rubens did for her in her sickness all in his power. He employed four doctors and had prayers said for her in many churches. But it was all in vain. Her gentle spirit was called to its long reward, and Rubens remained alone with his orphaned sons. Beneath the blow the strong head was bowed, and when

his friend Dupuis offered him the consolations of philosophy, Rubens replied in a letter so full of genuine feeling that it should be copied.

"Your lordship is right to remind me that I must submit to the destiny that yields not to our inclinations and passions, for it obeys the supreme Power and does not account to us for, nor reason with us about, its actions. As an absolute ruler it disposes of all things, and since we must needs obey it like slaves, we can only try by submission to make our dependence as honorable and endurable as possible. But this duty seems to me at present very trying and difficult. It is thus with great wisdom that your lordship exhorts me to rely on time, which will do for me what my reason ought to do, for I have no pretension of ever attaining an impassive stoicism. In my opinion no man can be wholly unmoved by the different impressions that events produce in him, or preserve an equal indifference towards all wordly matters. I believe on the contrary that it is right on certain occasions to blame such indifference rather than to praise it, and that the feelings which rise spontaneously in our hearts should not be condemned. In truth, I have lost an excellent companion, and one worthy of all affection, for she had none of the faults of her sex. Never displaying bitterness or weakness, her kindness and loyalty were perfect; and her rare qualities having made her beloved during her life, have caused her to be regretted by all after her death. Such a loss, it seems to me, ought to be deeply felt, and since the only remedy for all evils is the oblivion that time brings, I must undoubtedly look to time for consolation. But it will be very difficult for me to separate the grief caused by this bereavement from the memory of one whom I must respect and honor as long as I live. A journey might, perhaps, serve to take me away from the sight of the many objects which necessarily renew my grief, for she alone fills my henceforth empty house; she alone lies by my side on my desolate couch; whereas the new sights that a journey affords occupy the imagination and furnish no material for the regrets that are

forever springing up in one's heart. But I should travel in vain, for I shall have myself for companion everywhere."

IV

WANDERING YEARS

WITHOUT the dear companion of his joys and griefs, the home that Rubens had loved so much lost its charm. Even his great collection of paintings and statuary could no longer delight his tear-dimmed eyes. So when the Duke of Buckingham offered him 100,000 florins for it, the offer was accepted. Rich and able to earn great sums by his brush, Rubens had no need of the money, and only a great sorrow that took the interest out of all earthly things and reminded him of the duty to provide largely for his youthful sons could have led him to such a step. The price paid was then unexampled, though many a single picture among them would now bring a larger sum.

Thus denuded of its glory, his home, which was now but a sad reminder of departed joys, attracted him no more; and Rubens longed to travel and to seek in other lands and among the distractions of public business, oblivion of his grief. The condition of the world was pitiful, and required his help. Everywhere there was war, caused either by religious fanaticism, selfish ambition or presumptuous folly. The nations groaned beneath the burden, and there was none to bring relief. The principal thrones were filled by weaklings. Spain, ruler of Flanders, was declining every day beneath the incapable rule of Philip IV and his minister Olivares. Charles I was rushing to his doom in England. Only in France, Richelieu ruled in the name of his feeble master with remorse-

less vigor and boundless ambition, building up that absolute monarchy that was to crush the nation's life. England was at war with France and Spain, Spain at war with the Netherlands, Richelieu at war with the Huguenots. Things were going badly in Flanders because of the wars, and the enlightened Archduchess wished to send to Madrid an envoy worthy of herself. Rubens wanted to go. He felt the need of new scenes that would divert his mind from the contemplation of his sorrow. He believed, too, that if he could gain access to the Spanish monarch he could, with his rare tact, win him over, and secure a munificent patron for his art. So, for the only time in his career, so far as we know, he intrigued for the place. A curious letter is preserved which he wrote to Gerbier, Buckingham's agent, urging Gerbier to write the Archduchess and the Spanish statesmen, as if spontaneously, and to get others to write, urging his appointment. He closes with a request that the letter be burnt, which, as usual, secured its preservation.

England, defeated and discredited on every hand and driven back with ignominy when she attempted the relief of La Rochelle, closely besieged by Richelieu, was anxious for peace. Buckingham, through Gerbier, had been sounding Rubens, who thus had in his hands all the threads of the negotiations. He suggested that he be sent to Madrid to lay the matter before the King. Philip IV at first objected to employing a mere painter in such high affairs. He wrote:

"It might throw deserved discredit on the monarchy, for its prestige must suffer if ambassadors are forced to discuss such grave matters with a man of low rank. If the country whence the proposals emanate is to be free to choose the intermediary, and if England finds nothing improper in the choice of Rubens, the selection is nevertheless a matter of great regret to us."

The Archduchess insisted, and was finally allowed to have her way. So in August, 1628, Rubens set out upon his journey, passing through Paris so hastily that he did not even call upon his dear friends, only making one detour to witness the siege of La Rochelle, where he was much impressed with the energy and ability of the great Cardinal. He reached Madrid on September 10. Philip IV had so far overcome his reluctance to receive him as to provide for him quarters in the palace with a spacious studio attached. Here Rubens remained until April 29th of the succeeding year.

One object of his journey was speedily accomplished. The Archduchess Isabella had been absent from Spain so long that many of the royal family, including the Queen, were unknown to her. Rubens was commissioned to paint for her the King, his consort and most of her other kinsmen. This brought him into close relations with Philip IV, who was an intelligent connoisseur and had himself practised the art of painting with the indifferent success that usually attends the efforts of royal personages. He at once perceived the genius of the master, and thenceforth he was Rubens' most distinguished patron. Of their intercourse Rubens writes:

"Here, as everywhere, I am busy painting; and I have already done an equestrian portrait of his majesty, who has expressed his approval and satisfaction. He shows excellent taste in painting, and has, it seems to me, very remarkable qualities. I can now judge him personally, for as I live in the palace he comes to see me nearly every day. I have also painted portraits of all the members of the royal family, who have kindly sat to me, that I might carry out the orders of my mistress, her most serene highness the Infanta."

Spain then had a number of distinguished artists, among them Montañes, Alonso Cano, Zurbaran and Velasquez.

None of them seem to have made any impression on Rubens save the latter. Only twenty-nine years of age, Velasquez was already the court painter. Rubens saw much of him, and inspired in him a longing to visit Italy, which was soon to be put into action. But the art of the two great men was so radically different that neither had any effect upon the other's style. The Spaniard, supreme among naturalists, saw only the literal fact, saw it with clear, keen eyes from which nothing could escape. The Fleming, on the other hand, was one of the greatest poets of the brush, never content with reality, but seeking always something stronger or more beautiful than nature had to offer. Still, after Rubens' visit, the style of Velasquez loses something of its hardness and acquires a suavity before unknown; so that it seems likely that he learned something from his distinguished visitor.

The negotiations lingered in the true Spanish fashion in that land of *mañana*. The time was largely spent by Rubens in making copies for his own use of the masterpieces of Titian, now in the Prado. These are copies with strange variations of detail and technic, so infused with the exuberant vitality of the great copyist that they possess an interest scarcely inferior to the originals. Rubens kept them by him to the end, and in the meantime acquired ten more works from the brush of the Venetian master, to replace in some measure those sold to Buckingham in the hour of his grief.

At last the Spanish court made up its mind. Rubens was authorized to proceed to England and to conclude a truce, later to be converted into a peace by ambassadors of higher rank. He hastened back to Brussels, got his credentials from the Archduchess, and hurried on to London. But, as usual, the Spanish government was too late. England had already made terms with France, and Spain could no longer win her for an ally. Still, peace might be

secured; and to this end Rubens devoted all his energy and address.

He reached London on June 5, 1629, and put up at the house of his friend, Gerbier. Buckingham had been assassinated, but Charles I had learned no wisdom. Still, he was a knightly gentleman, who had exquisite taste in matters of art, and he welcomed Rubens warmly. The nobles of his court followed his example. The Earl of Arundel, whose portrait Rubens had already painted, received him with the greatest favor. The Earl of Carlisle took him riding in his coach every day. Lords and ministers gave fêtes in his honor. The King had him paint his portrait. The learned were not behind in their attentions. Cambridge University conferred upon him the merited degree of Master of Arts. Yet he did not enjoy the companionship of the learned men of England. He writes that he finds them "generally of an austere temper, like the most bigoted theologians." The man whose society he would most have enjoyed, the learned and accomplished Selden, was lying in prison for having protested in Parliament against the unlawful exactions of the Crown.

In a letter to Peiresc, Rubens shows that despite all his elegance, he had an interest in the highly spiced passages of history. He writes: "Boswell is going to show me certain passages concerning Theodora's debauches, omitted in Procopius' "Anecdota Arcana," and probably suppressed for propriety's sake in Alemanni's edition; but which have been printed from an unpublished manuscript in the Vatican."

Rubens was astonished at the art treasures that he found in England. Charles I had purchased from the spendthrift Duke of Mantua his vast collection. The Earl of Arundel had gathered together almost as many masterpieces of ancient and modern art. Rubens' own rich gleanings were there. So he found many familiar friends; and

here he made his remarkably free copy of Mantegna's *Triumph of Julius Cæsar,* which in his youth he had so often seen at Mantua, adding to it a landscape background and giving to the figures an animation and action strangely at variance with the work of the most sculptural of painters.

While in England Rubens received the commission to paint the decorations for the ceiling of the Banquet Hall of Whitehall Palace. If the commission to glorify Marie de' Medici had been a hard one, this was far harder. Rubens was to glorify the memory of James I! It is not surprising that the work was unworthy of his genius, full of frigid allegories, painted without conviction or enthusiasm. Still, the pictures may have been better than now seems possible in their ruinous condition. We know that they pleased King Charles, who was no mean judge; and if Rubens had to wait long for his £3,000, it was only because the royal treasury was empty.

While in England Rubens painted for the King one picture that still survives to delight the eye, his *Minerva Protecting Peace against War* now in the National Gallery. It is one of the best of the many compositions in which he sought to impress upon the warring nations the blessings of that peace which they were so madly trampling under foot. He gave it to the King as an allegory that might incline the royal mind to better ways. In the beautiful children that do homage to Peace he has immortalized the offspring of his kind host, Gerbier.

At last the terms of peace were agreed upon, and on February 21, 1630, King Charles bestowed on him the honor of Knighthood, and besides presented him with a jeweled sword, a chain of gold, a diamond ring from his own finger, and a hat-band set with diamonds valued at £480. On the 3rd of the following month Rubens departed, honored by all, and conscious of having deserved

well of his country. He could not enjoy his new rank without the sanction of his own sovereign; but this Philip IV granted, and thenceforth he became Sir Peter.

Rubens had made such a favorable impression in England, that it was proposed to make him the resident minister at the British Court. Fortunately the Spanish Junta concluded that it was impossible "to give the title of his Majesty's minister to a man living by the work of his hands"; and so Rubens was saved for art.

V

SECOND MARRIAGE AND LATER DAYS

Returning to Antwerp after an absence of two years, Rubens found his pupils and assistants dispersed and the stately mansion intolerably desolate. His friends urged him to marry one of the great ladies of the court, as his new rank, his renown and wealth would justify his doing. His heart, however, led him to a wiser course. Among the families in which he was intimate was that of the Fourments, and upon the youngest daughter of the house, sister of her whom he had immortalized as the *Chapeau de Poil,* his choice fell. She was only sixteen, but already her voluptuous beauty was in its full development. A mature gentleman of fifty-three, Rubens fell madly in love. Writing to Peiresc, he thus seeks to justify his selection in the eyes of his philosophic friend:

"I determined to marry again, because I did not feel myself old enough to be condemned to perpetual celibacy, and after a period of self-denial, it is sweet to enjoy permitted pleasures. I have chosen a young wife from an honorable middle-class family, although everybody wanted me to choose someone from the court circle. But I feared the evil quality of pride which

generally accompanies rank; and is especially strong in high-born women. I preferred a woman who would not be ashamed to see me handle my brushes, and, to be quite honest, I should have found it hard to barter my precious liberty for the embraces of an old woman."

No such calm reasoning, but an overwhelming passion, led him to choose the fair Helen. Rarely has a woman been so idolized by a man. Henceforth his art is one glorious hymn to Helen's beauty.

According to our standards that beauty lacks distinction; but tastes differ, and the good people of Flanders no doubt have as much right to their opinion as we. Certain it is that her contemporaries were extravagant in her praise, calling her the New Helen, and likening her to that Helen who

> "Launched a thousand ships
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium."

In speaking of the *Judgment of Paris,* now at Madrid, the Archduke Ferdinand, a Spaniard accustomed to the supremely beautiful women of his own southern land, wrote to his brother Philip IV: "The Venus who occupies the central place is a very good likeness of the painter's wife, the most beautiful of all the ladies of Antwerp."

Fortunately we know her charms as we know the charms of no other woman that has ever lived in all the eons of time. Rubens has depicted her in every state of nudity and dress, in every attitude; depicted her with so much love that he found in her no defects to be smoothed over, no need of idealization. He has given her to us clothed as a fashionable dame in silks and satins, walking, standing, seated; he has presented her in every stage of nudity, from the complete unveiling of the *Andromeda* and the *Venuses,* to the far more suggestive semi-nudity of *La Pelisse.* She

was indeed a lovely creature. The beauty of the face is a dollish beauty, with its round, full contours, its great childish eyes; but it is almost perfect of its type. The form, however, leaves more to be desired. It is too full, too soft, the form of a woman who has taken no exercise. The knees particularly are ill-formed. But never was there flesh so white, never flesh with so satiny a sheen. She is the complete realization of that type of the perfect blonde toward which the art of Rubens had tended from the first. It is not surprising that she should have won the painter's heart.

As showing how completely Helen realized Rubens' ideal, there are in the large *Last Judgment* at Munich, most conspicuous among the blest who are ascending to heaven, the life-sized figures of two women, a mature one with dark hair affectionately embracing a younger one of most voluptuous form and whitest flesh, who looks precisely like Helen Fourment in all her beauty. Everybody who sees the picture exclaims that here Rubens has depicted his two wives ascending to heaven in loving concord. Yet when the picture was painted Helen was but a child, and while the elder may be Isabella Brant, the younger is certainly not the master's second wife.

The marriage took place in the Church of St. Jacques on December 6, 1630. The Fourments must have been rich; for though there were ten children in the family, Helen brought as dowry an income of 3,000 Flemish pounds. Despite the disparity of ages the union proved both happy and fruitful. Helen, who seems to have been of the sweet and easy disposition that her features imply, could not fail to be pleased with the wealth and luxury with which Rubens surrounded her, and the splendid clothes and jewels with which he delighted to adorn her lovely person; nor could she fail to enjoy the high position into which her marriage raised her, the eminent friends

that gathered around her hearth and the homage which they paid to her beauty, no doubt as much on her husband's account as on her own. She passed almost from the nursery to a place as one of the leading ladies of the land. As for Rubens, he adored her, and he scarcely painted a picture in which she did not appear; while the four beautiful children that she bore him ere he died serve almost as frequently as models. How she improved in contact with his marvelous personality is well revealed by the two portraits that hang opposite each other in one of the cabinets of the Munich Gallery. In the first she appears as a young girl whose mind and passions are not yet awake. She is beautiful, but it is the beauty of a bisque doll, lovely, but thoroughly uninteresting. The body is there in all its rich development, but the soul is not yet aroused. In the second, painted shortly before the master's death, we see an accomplished woman of the world, educated by contact with refined and learned persons, a woman who has known the joys of love and who is worthy to be the wife of so perfect a gentleman and to preside over a household where all that was wisest and brightest in the society of the time was accustomed to gather.

The difference between the two marriages of Rubens is well revealed in the portraits that he made shortly after each. His nuptial picture with Isabella Brant, of which we have spoken, represents them seated hand in hand in sweet matrimonial companionship. *La Pelisse,* painted shortly after his marriage with Helen, shows her coming from the bath with a fur pelisse cast about her, concealing a portion of her form. It is probably his high-water mark in flesh-painting, perhaps the most wonderful piece of flesh-painting in the world, a thing of ravishing beauty despite the imperfections of the model; but it is no longer

the sisterly hand in hand, which Rossetti declared to be the sweetest thing in love.

She lent herself to his service with an amiability and an abandon without example even among the wives of artists. Houbraken says that she was for Rubens a valuable possession, for she spared him the expense of other models. The painter used her fair form without reserve, and henceforth she is the center of all his works, and she wrought a revolution in his art.

It is customary to divide Rubens' productions into three manners. This is, of course, arbitrary. His art was a constant growth, an uninterrupted progress toward the light. His first period, when he was under the influence of contemporary Italians, was merely a time when he was seeking his way, though it extended to an age at which most artists have done much of their best work. It was characterized by the black shadows of Caravaggio, the strained muscles of the imitators of Michelangelo. With the *Descent from the Cross* his second period is supposed to begin, a period of brilliant colors, which, however, stand out a little hard and without fusion. The third period had already begun before his marriage with Helen, as is apparent in the *Adoration of the Kings* and the *Assumption of the Virgin* at Antwerp. Here shadows give place to light, and the colors are fused and harmonized in a way that makes Rubens incomparably the most brilliant of all colorists, if not the greatest. Some prefer the silver grays of Velasquez, some the mellow splendor of Venice; but everyone must concede that in brilliancy Rubens surpasses them all.

How he attained this dazzling brilliancy we cannot tell. He had numerous assistants, among them most of the great Flemish artists of the time. They used his palette, they worked upon his canvases. They wished their style

to harmonize with his, he wished them to do their best. Yet we can rarely fail to recognize his magic touch. It lends to the picture a radiant glow which casts all else into the background, and which the passage of three hundred years has not dimmed, save where the picture has been abused.

Helen was not the cause of Rubens' third manner, but under the inspiration of her beauty it advanced daily in brilliancy and splendor. She must have spent the greater part of her time posing for him, sometimes clothed in fine raiment, more often in varying stages of nudity. And this had an admirable effect upon the master's art. He could not admit his pupils into the room where his wife was posing undraped; and so, instead of the immense pictures that he had been painting with the help of many hands, he devoted himself chiefly to works of moderate dimensions done with his own brush. These are the most perfect of his achievements, among the most perfect things that the hand of man has wrought. They are not the gross banquets of the flesh of his earlier days, when he painted without love the voluptuous forms of hired models. There is, it is true, no idealization, for Helen seemed perfect in his eyes, and he did not deem it possible to improve her face or form. But the hand that wields the brush is the hand of love, and every touch is a caress. The shadows pass away, and light reigns supreme. Beneath its lustrous glow the young flesh shines and glows and is alive.

Among the marvels of this period it is hard to choose. The *Pelisse* is the one that Rubens esteemed the most, for he kept it with him to the end, and in his will directed that it be not sold; apparently forgetting that a nude picture of their mother must be embarrassing to her children. Perhaps the finest picture inspired by the beauty of Helen is the *Homage to Venus* at Vienna, suggested by Titian's great work in the Prado, but thoroughly original and su-

premely beautiful. Here Helen appears, borne off, not unwillingly, in the arms of an amorous satyr. Nor is this the only case in which the artist puts his bride in embarrassing situations. For example, at Munich she appears as a shepherdess submitting to the gross caresses of a shepherd; in the Prado she appears as a nymph surprised by satyrs; again, at Munich and Madrid, as Susannah beneath the greedy gaze of the elders, or Bathsheba at the bath with David looking on. Far purer are the representations of Helen completely nude, posing as Venus in the two *Judgments of Paris,* one in the National Gallery, the other in the Prado, pictures of a surpassing beauty, though the heavy forms give them an appearance of uncouthness when reduced to black and white. One of the most charming presentations of her charms is the *Cimon and Iphigenia* at Vienna, where the surpassing loveliness of her perfect blonde flesh shines in almost unparalleled splendor, as she lies dreaming of love beneath the astonished gaze of the amorous hind. Again she appears in the Prado in different positions as the *Three Graces,* and again as *Venus with Adonis* in the exquisite picture at Berlin. But of all the nude portraits of her the *Andromeda* at Berlin is the most delightful. It is perhaps the greatest marvel of flesh painting in all the range of art — so splendid in its lustrous beauty and its abounding vitality that the beholder is riveted to the spot with admiration. Beneath the caressing light the flesh gleams and lives with a loveliness that certainly was never surpassed by mortal brush and which perhaps was never equaled.

The portraits of her clothed are even more enchanting. Her face was almost faultless of its type, and she wore her rich garments with becoming grace. From the picture shortly after their marriage when she in her girlish beauty walks beside her husband in their lovely garden, an exquisite doll, to the maturer richness of the *St. Cecilia* at

Berlin, she is always delightful, always painted with a loving touch that makes the canvas glow with light and palpitate with life. The most charming of them all is that at Munich, where she holds her naked child on her lap.

Rubens painted one hundred and sixty-five portraits in all, and at his best he is a great portrait painter. But it is not a branch of the art which he preferred. His exuberant imagination, one of the most intensely creative in the realm of art, abhorred the literal fact; and it is only when love or friendship guides the brush that he is at his best. It is in the portraits of his two wives, of the children whom he loved so much, and of the accomplished scholars who were his chosen friends, that he is seen to most advantage. These are admirable in their apparent fidelity to nature, and extremely vital.

Rubens was not to be left long in the enjoyment of his home. In July, 1631, Marie de' Medici escaped from her confinement at Compiègne and sought refuge in Flanders, where she was joined by her second son, Gaston of Orleans. She was a most embarrassing guest. Her presence might plunge the country into war with France, yet it was needful to treat her royally, for she might at any time be reconciled to the King her son, or restored to power by the passing out of his flickering life. In her embarrassment the Archduchess turned to Rubens, whose intimate acquaintance with the exiled queen made him a fitting mediator. He managed his delicate task with infinite tact, but for eight months he was kept away from home and work. Now for the only time in his life he counseled war. He hated Richelieu, whom he looked upon as the disturber of the peace of Europe; and he thought that the Queen Mother and Gaston would have following enough to overthrow the Cardinal if Spain lent her aid. The Junta, however, had had experience of Richelieu's power, and, no doubt wisely, rejected Rubens' proposal.

The next year Rubens was again to be called away from his painting. The rapid successes of the Dutch had compelled the Archduchess to convoke the Estates General of Flanders after an interval of more than thirty years. The crisis was so urgent that that body determined to treat directly with Holland without waiting for the slow action of Spain. So it appointed commissioners for that purpose, among them the Duke of Aerschot. The Archduchess chose Rubens to represent her in the negotiations. Rubens addressed a letter to the Duke, who replied in a most insulting communication, in which he berated Rubens like a lackey for presuming to write to him instead of coming in person to pay his respects, as became one of his humble rank. To make the offense the deeper the Duke published the letter. Little did the supposed great man think that he would be remembered only for the insult that he offered to the man who was truly great. Against an outrage from such a quarter there was no redress, and Rubens wisely determined to retire from a profession that exposed him to such affronts. In 1633 the good Archduchess died, and the master had no further temptation to enter the field of diplomacy.

Yet his troubles were not over. The Archduke Ferdinand, brother of the King of Spain, was appointed to succeed the beloved Infanta. He had been made a cardinal at the age of fourteen, and in 1632 had become a soldier, to war against the Protestants, whom he overwhelmed under Duke Bernard of Weimar. The authority entrusted to him was despotic, and it was feared that he would use it to restore the era of persecution and the atrocities of Alva. All Flanders trembled at his approach. It was necessary to propitiate him, and Antwerp determined to make his entry an occasion of such splendor as would convince him of the city's loyalty. Rubens was put in charge of the decorations, upon which he spent six months

of labor and 78,000 florins. He was assisted by all the sculptors, painters and architects of Antwerp. Nothing more gorgeous was ever got up. There were triumphal arches, adorned with statuary and painting, laudatory addresses from ornate theaters erected for the occasion, pictures, banners, processions, everything that could flatter a ruler's vanity or attest the devotion of his people. When in April, 1635, the Archduke made his entry, he was delighted with the brilliancy of his reception. He sent for Rubens, and as the master, worn out by his vast exertions, was in bed with the gout, the Archduke called upon him and thanked him for the magnificent display. On April 15th of the next year the Archduke confirmed Rubens in his position of court painter. The master afterward painted of him the two portraits, one at Munich and the other at Vienna, in which he is represented as a gay and handsome cavalier. Nor was the money spent on his reception thrown away; for he was not unkind to Antwerp.

The decorations were left standing for a month, and were much injured by the weather; but some of Rubens' contributions have been preserved, among which is the *Neptune calming the Waves,* called the *Quos Ego,* at Dresden, a masterpiece of animated action.

This was the last of Rubens' public employments, though his advice was still often sought by the Antwerp council in the serious complications of the time. The following month he bought the handsome Château de Steen, then a grim medieval castle with portcullis and battlements and with extensive grounds. To it he added a commodious studio, and made many improvements that converted it into a comfortable home. For the property he paid 93,000 florins, while the alterations cost 7,000 more. This indicates how prosperous were his circumstances. The Château still stands, but so modernized that Rubens would not recognize it.

For the remaining five years of his life Rubens spent his summers in the country, returning to Antwerp only when compelled by the inclemency of the season. It was at the Château de Steen and at an age when most artists have done their best work that Rubens painted some of his most perfect pictures. In nearly all of them Helen figures, sometimes as a pagan nymph or goddess, sometimes as the Mother of God, sometimes as a saint.

One of the most charming works of this time is the *Garden of Love* in the Prado, that delightful representation of high-born dames and cavaliers in the garden of a stately palace, strolling or seated in pairs, absorbed in amorous discourse. This was the origin of the lovely pictures of Watteau, Lancret, Pater and their school, which were to delight the eighteenth century. But in splendor of color, in strength, in dignity carried even into the soft offices of love, in the rich handling of costly raiment, none of those charming painters approached the mighty master.

In contrast to this is the *Kermesse* of the Louvre. Here it is no knightly gathering of lords and ladies, who even in the fullness of passion know how to control the manifestations of their ardor. A group of peasants, drunk with love and wine, give free rein to their sensual appetites. Shame is thrown to the winds, all restraints of custom and observance are cast aside, and the animal in man alone survives. Yet it was not painted as a satire, as Hogarth might have done. It is plain that the master revels in this apotheosis of man's sensuality, as a follower of Dionysus might delight in the bacchantes' unseemly orgies.

Other pictures of the time are the *Rape of the Sabines* and the *Brazen Serpent* of the National Gallery and the *Massacre of the Innocents* at Munich, scenes of tumult and confusion such as Rubens alone could paint; but rendered with a power and brilliancy which no one else could hope

to rival. The effects of gleaming light on shining flesh were never more powerfully rendered.

To these last days also belong some of Rubens' most glorious mythological pictures, teeming with vitality and magnificent in the fusion of their incomparable glory of color, such as the *Mercury and Argus* at Dresden and Madrid, the *Meleager and Atalanta,* and *Diana and Actæon* at Munich, and the *Nymphs and Fauns,* the *Nymphs of Diana surprised by Satyrs,* and the *Diana and Calisto* at Madrid; above all, the two versions of the *Judgment of Paris* and the *Andromeda* of which we have spoken. It was in these days, too, that he painted the exquisite *Shepherd and Shepherdess* and the *Susannah and the Elders* at Munich, in which his incomparable handling of rich blonde flesh is shown at its best.

It was in these later days that he painted the two religious pictures which are by many esteemed his masterpieces in that line, the *Martyrdom of St. Lieven,* showing the saint's agony comforted by angels, a picture wonderful in light and color, and finer still, the *Ascent to Calvary* at Brussels, a truly marvelous work. The soldiers are marching up the mountain. Some have turned the corner of the rock, and only their lance heads gleam in the light. Two officers are riding on, and in their riding there is something strangely remorseless like the march of fate in a Greek tragedy. The sky is overcast, but a beam of light breaks through and falls upon the flanks of the white horse that bears one of the centurions. Behind, in the shadow of the cross that he is bearing, Christ has fallen, and from his brow Helen as St. Veronica is wiping the sweat of his bitter agony. Still further down the hill the thieves are being driven to their awful doom, and their attitude expresses their despair. It is a work of supreme tragedy, of prodigious power, and painted with a supple skill that even Rubens attained only in later days.

Among his last pictures is the *Horrors of War* in the Pitti, painted in 1639; a truly splendid work hung in so bad a light that its glory of color can only be understood on the rare occasions when it is brought down to be copied. Mars, in full armor, breaks away from the lovely Venus who seeks to restrain him, and rushes on, preceded by a torch-bearing Fury, to trample the widow and the orphan under foot, while Europe, clothed in mourning and with her diadem of flowers, raises to heaven her arms and tear-dimmed eyes in protest and lamentation. It was a noble legacy from him who had so earnestly striven for peace and justice among men, a standing protest against those horrors of war which during his whole life he had seen on every hand — wars with no excuse save the ambition of princes and the bigotry of priests.

Among Rubens' richest contributions to art are the landscapes that he painted while at Steen. He had painted a few landscapes in earlier days, but they are not of commanding importance. The human figure then engrossed his attention. Now in the quietude of the country, he turned again to nature, and studied her moods with singular penetration. It is chiefly the flat, rich, highly cultivated region around his château that he paints; but he presents it with such truth and insight that his landscapes constitute an era in the progress of the art. Upon them the landscape school of Holland built its magnificent structure. In addition to these homely scenes he also gives us a number drawn from his imagination, in which figure mountains, rocks and torrents, anticipating the works of Everdingen and Ruysdael. These, however, are far less true to nature, far less important, than those which depict the country about his rural home. Here the rich, fat land, so surpassing in its fruitfulness, as full of vital force as his human types, is presented with loving care, bathed in its moist atmosphere suffused with light. The scenes are tame,

and in the hands of a lesser artist they would be uninteresting; but he makes them live again beneath his magic brush, and even in this flat region he conveys a sense of infinite space and distance. The cloud effects, too, are wonderful; studied with a care and painted with a skill then unprecedented in the history of art. In that moist region, where the sky is rarely cloudless, the master had fullest opportunity to study their shifting forms with their ever varying illumination; and as he wandered with his fair young wife about the grounds of Steen, he loved to watch their changing shapes and hues.

And so his later days passed peacefully away, filled with quiet work. He was so happy and so contented in his home that he cared for nothing else. Even his correspondence was suffered to languish. But his infatuation for his lovely young wife did not, as so often happens, turn his heart from the children of his former union. In his will, made not long before his death, he provided generously for them; and it is pleasing to know that Helen concurred in its provisions.

In the autumn of 1639 failing health compelled Rubens to take up his abode in his city home earlier than usual. His old enemy, the gout, had returned upon him with renewed violence. Through the winter he gradually declined, and on the 30th of May, 1640, he passed away, in his sixty-fourth year, a noble gentleman upon whose life there is no reproach.

As was befitting so great a man, his obsequies were magnificent. There were four great funeral banquets, with an enormous outpouring of that Ay wine which had been his favorite beverage, and which, though drunk in moderation according to the standards of the time, no doubt contributed to produce the gout that caused his death. Eight hundred funeral masses were said for the repose of his soul. He left an estate valued at over three

hundred thousand dollars, and his descendants are still in affluent circumstances, though the ancestral homes passed from their possession within the time of the first generation. Besides the pictures which the family retained, three hundred and fourteen, partly by Rubens' hand, partly by other masters, were sold, and brought 69,553 florins, then an immense sum, but less than many of them would now bring singly. His home on the Wapper realized 20,000 florins when it was sold twenty years later.

Though she bore a fifth child after Rubens' death, Helen was too fair, too young, too much a creature of this world to spend the remainder of her days in a widow's weeds; and so, after a decent interval of five years, she married J. B. van Broekhoven, Lord of Bergheyke, Alderman of Antwerp and Councillor of the High Court of Brussels. Her choice seems to have been a wise one. Certainly her second husband acted with admirable justice and generosity in dealing with the sons of Rubens' first marriage. Let us hope that Helen lived happily to the end, for to her we owe some of the greatest joys that art can bring.

With his usual modesty, Rubens said a few days before his death: "If my family consider me worthy of the memorial they may build a chapel in the church of St. Jacques to receive my remains, and in that event they may place there my picture of the *Virgin and Saints* (the St. George picture) and the marble statue of *Our Lady of Sorrows* by Faydherbe." His wishes were carried out, and he now sleeps in his favorite church, while St. George and the Virgin keep watch above his tomb.

VELASQUEZ

1599–1660

I

THE REALIST

Of all the old masters Velasquez exerts the greatest influence on the art of our times. When one of Whistler's overzealous admirers said to him, "There are only two great painters, you and Velasquez," the artist replied with his accustomed effrontery, "Why drag in Velasquez?" But Velasquez was not dragged in. He was already there. Without him Whistler would never have been the painter that we know; nor would Mr. Sargent, Mr. Chase, Mr. Zorn, nor many another of our leading masters of the brush paint as they do. These men have all sat at the feet of the great Spaniard, striving, and, it must be admitted, striving in vain, to learn the secret of his power.

On his paternal side Velasquez was descended from a noble Spanish family that had been settled in Portugal since 1040. One of his ancestors had been governor of the land after the Spanish conquest. The family estates were at Quinta de Silva, some eight miles from Oporto; but they had passed into other hands long before the painter's birth, and his ancestors had sunk into comparative poverty. This led Velasquez's grandfather, Diego Rodriguez de Silva, to leave Portugal with his wife Maria, and to settle in Seville, then the most flourishing city of the Peninsula, where he might hope to improve his fortunes. There a son was born to them, who received the name of Juan. The latter wedded Gerónima Velasquez, the daughter of one of the lesser noblemen of Seville.

The great master was born early in June, 1599, at No. 8 Calle de Gorgoja. The house has disappeared. He was christened on the 6th of that month, Diego Rodriguez, after his grandfather. As was the custom in Andalusia, he afterwards added the maternal name, so that he became Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velasquez. As the name of Velasquez was that of an influential family, Diego employed it in after years in preference to his paternal surname. He spelled it *Velazquez,* with two *z*'s, in the Spanish fashion; but as *Velasquez,* with an *s,* has become the established form in English, we shall adhere to its use, just as we write Saragossa for Zaragoza.

Velasquez was singularly fortunate in all the circumstances of his life. So far as we know, he never had a serious disappointment or defeat. Born of ancient and honorable families on both sides, he was entitled in that land of hidalgos to the respect due his birth. His parents were in at least comfortable circumstances, so that he never felt the pressure of want. Though of noble blood, they did not oppose his vocation as a painter. In early youth he acquired the royal favor, which continually augmented to the end.

He is a striking exception to Taine's dictum that art is a product of its surroundings. Born and reared in gay, splendor-loving, fanatically religious Seville, the great apostle of realism, who planted his feet more firmly on the earth than any other man who ever wielded the brush, and the basis of whose color scheme is a silvery gray, should have been a painter of religious pictures, gorgeous in coloring. Genius, however, follows its own path, often despite its environment.

At the time of Velasquez's birth, Seville was at the height of its greatness. It was the chief port of Spain, and into its lap was poured the wealth of the Indies. The river Guadalquivir, now so inadequate for commercial purposes,

would float the small vessels of that day, so that Seville's position was not unlike that of London on the Thames. Before the discovery of America it had been the most flourishing of Spanish cities. After that event its prosperity was enormous. The plunderings of the *conquistadores* and the enormous profits of legitimate trade with new lands that knew not the value of European goods went alike to enrich the Queen of Andalusia. In its aspect it was then, as it remains to-day, more than half Oriental. Its mansions were built around courts where fountains played beneath the shadow of palms and where the scent of flowers was heavy on the air; and the walls were adorned by far-sought objects of art, the spoils of distant lands.

The first employment of the newly acquired wealth was in the erection of that vast cathedral, second in size only to St. Peter's at Rome. Then there were built great numbers of churches and monasteries. As under Philip the Second and his feeble son the power of the Church continually grew and religious fanaticism became ever more a mania, the number who donned the monastic habit incessantly increased until the city was full of monasteries and convents. All these demanded the brush of the painter to adorn their walls and to keep at high tension the faith of their inmates. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, sanctioned by Pope Paul V in a brief of 1617 when Velasquez was eighteen, also gave a great impetus to painting. It was a new and a splendid theme that must be illustrated. They saw the Immaculate Conception in the words of the Apocalypse, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars"; a subject that Murillo was to make the theme of many delightful works. It appealed not only to their devotion but to their pride; for it was in Seville that the doctrine had first been advocated.

So, there was no lack of painters in Seville, and when Velasquez appeared on the scene they were busy in painting a wilderness of pictures for the decoration of the religious edifices. These were mostly of a Spanish type; the craze for imitating the Italians having passed away before Velasquez's day.

Diego as a boy was sent to the grammar school; but his vocation for painting was irresistible, and his parents put him at the age of thirteen under Francisco de Herrera, then called "the Michelangelo of Seville." He was a painter of considerable merit, but of an ungovernable temper that bordered on insanity. His intolerable fury drove his son to seek a refuge in Italy and his daughter to a convent. Year by year he became more violent in disposition and in the conception and execution of his pictures, till at last they seem to be the work of a madman. It has been said of his later works that "he cast off the rules of art as a maniac does his clothes." It is related that when everyone else had deserted him, he would have his old cook smear the colors on his vast canvases with her mop, and would then work them into pictures. Mr. Ricketts says that his later brushwork reminds one of macaroni in tomato sauce. Still, he was enormously esteemed as a painter by his fellow-townsmen, and at the time when Velasquez entered his studio he had not yet gone to the ultimate extreme. His violence, however, soon became intolerable to the young nobleman distinguished through life for his courtly manners; and the boy left the raging master for the pleasanter studio of Francisco Pacheco.

Pacheco was a poor painter, but, like many other poor painters, he was a good teacher. He had never been to Italy, but he had gone to Madrid, studied the masterpieces of Italian art in the royal palaces, and returning to Seville, had opened a school of painting. He was a cultivated gentleman of elegant manners, and his studio became the meet-

ing place for the artists and scholars of the city. He filled it with small, hastily made portraits of all the eminent personages who had honored him with a visit. He was the Vasari of Spain. His *Arte de la Pintura* is a poor enough treatise on painting, written in a stilted and tedious style; but it contains a great deal of information about Spanish artists, and to it we owe most of what we know of Pacheco's distinguished pupil. Pacheco's figures are wooden and lifeless, his pictures stiff in drawing, unhappy in composition and notably poor in color; and his literary style is no better. He had, however, the great merit of an extreme liberality of view. He did not wish his pupils to imitate him, but to develop their own talents, whatever they might be.

He was a good master for Velasquez. He could teach the youth the elements of technic, and that was all that so original a genius required. He, moreover, insisted strongly upon drawing, and kept his pupils constantly at work with the pencil. Velasquez was never notable as a draughtsman. He thought in contours, not in lines. Few drawings by his hand have come down to us, and these but slight and hasty. When he saw an object the modeled figure presented itself to his eye. Still, the general excellence of the drawing of his pictures shows the results of his early discipline.

Pacheco tells us that Velasquez "kept a peasant lad as an apprentice, who served him as a model in an endless variety of actions and postures — weeping, laughing, sometimes asleep and sometimes awake, and without avoiding any difficulty whatever, until he had grappled with every form of expression. From this model he drew many heads in charcoal and chalk on blue paper, and made similar studies from many other natives, until, in this way, he gained his sure hand in rendering a likeness."

Velasquez remained with Pacheco for five years, and on

April 23, 1618, the master bestowed upon him the hand of his daughter, Juana de Miranda. Of this Pacheco writes: "After five years of education and training, I married him to my daughter, induced by his youth, integrity and good qualities, and the prospects of his great natural genius." This shows that Pacheco was not only a man of discernment, but of notable tolerance; for the young Velasquez no sooner learned the rudiments of his craft than he forsook all the teachings of his master. Pacheco had striven to teach him the lofty style of the great Italians, and forthwith the youth proceeded to paint kitchen scenes which the Spaniards call *bodegones*. Instead of the idealism which Pacheco taught, he turned to a most uninspired realism. He was like the duckling that the hen has hatched out, and which then takes to its native element, to the horror of its foster mother.

Only the most thick and thin partisans of Velasquez can find much to admire in these early *bodegones*. They are deficient in composition and character, nor have they that lifelike quality that distinguishes the master's maturer works, while their color is dark and almost monochrome. Much the best of them is the *Aguador* or *Water Seller* of Apsley House. This is a meritorious, but not a great work. There is a sad dignity in the attitude of the water carrier, and much realistic power in it all.

There was nothing surprising in the taste of the young Velasquez for *bodegones*. Despite their grandiloquence there is in the Spanish nature a profound sense of the real. Beside Don Quixote on his charger, there always rides Sancho Panza on his ass. While Garcilaso de la Vega was writing his lyrics, Mendoza, or more probably someone else, was writing the "Lazarillo de Tormes," that novel of low life that found a thousand imitators. In the year of Velasquez's birth, Mateo Aleman of Seville published "Guz-

man de Alfarache," the most successful of these imitations. Italian art was in Spain always an alien influence which was never well assimilated, though at one time universally copied. Even now these *bodegones* of Velasquez and his contemporaries might be mistaken by the undiscerning for the work of a Dutchman. Nor is this so surprising as it might seem. Spain was the first country to learn from Flanders the art of painting in oil, and the early Spanish school is based upon the Flemish.

In these early days the young man also tried his hand at religious painting. Like all his colleagues he was forced to paint an *Immaculate Conception;* but instead of the beautiful Queens of Heaven to whom Murillo has accustomed us, he gives us a commonplace peasant girl who is evidently standing for her portrait, and whose homely features are reproduced with no attempt at idealization. So, in his *St. John at Patmos* we have a common young peasant of Moorish type with no suggestion of elevation of soul or even of intelligence. In 1619, when twenty years of age, he painted the *Adoration of the Kings,* in the Prado, and during the next year, he is believed to have painted the *Adoration of the Shepherds,* of the National Gallery. The former is presented in so familiar a manner that it is little more than a *bodegon,* or kitchen piece, and the latter is remarkable for its poor color and its unattractive types. It is only just to Velasquez to say that many now attribute it to Zurbaran. Both are strongly realistic; but as yet the realism is without charm, and it requires remarkable insight to read the future greatness of the master in these early works, as some have done. Still, they are good for so young a man, especially when we consider that his training had been in the wooden and lifeless school of Pacheco; and the *Adoration* shows marked skill in the handling of light and shade. The figures are evidently por-

traits, and as such they possess considerable power and are clearly characterized.

One of his early religious pictures he converted wholly into a *bodegon.* In *Christ in the House of Martha,* in the National Gallery, our Saviour appears only in a distant chamber with the Magdalen at his feet and Martha standing behind her, while all the foreground is filled by a discontented kitchen wench, working at her table covered with viands while an old woman admonishes her. It was a strangely realistic mind that could conceive of such a subject in such a way. The perspective is poor, so that Christ and the Marys do not seem far enough away for their reduced size.

We know that these *bodegones* of Velasquez were highly esteemed in his day, and that at least one of them hung in the Royal Palace.

While Velasquez was quietly studying in Seville, a great event happened, which was to mold his destiny. Philip III, the degenerate son of Philip II, passed away on the 31st of March, 1621, leaving the throne to his son, Philip IV, a youth of fifteen. At once the young king seized the reins of power, and disgraced and banished from court the incompetent and corrupt horde that had battened upon the kingdom during his father's reign. All Spain was in a fever of joyous expectation. But they were soon to learn that they had only exchanged King Log for King Stork. It was speedily perceived that the bold action of the young monarch was in no degree due to his own initiative, but that he was merely a puppet in the hands of his minister, Olivares.

This man, who was to complete the ruin of the Spanish Empire, and to efface Spain as a world-power, had many good qualities. Instead of the unbridled venality of De Lerma, minister to the late King, he was incorruptibly

honest. At a time when all public functionaries demanded large gifts from their suitors, Olivares would accept nothing save works of art. His industry and his application to the public business were enormous and untiring. Bold, ambitious, resolute, he was determined to restore the greatness of his country and to bring back the days when Spain under Charles V dominated the world. In ordinary times he might have met with a fair measure of success. But he fell on evil days. At every point he encountered the vast talents and the remorseless cunning of Richelieu. It was a duel to the death between them; and the Spaniard was no match for the mighty Cardinal. A liberal and intelligent patron of arts and letters, Olivares would have left a noble name had his activities been confined to his rôle of Mæcenas; and while he ruined his country, his services to literature and the arts should not be forgotten. It should be remembered, too, that it was his excessive love for Spain and his ambition to restore her greatness, not venality and corruption, that brought ruin on the land. He was not merely religious, but devout to the point of fanaticism. In his chamber he kept a coffin into which he would enter while the *De Profundis* was chanted. Upon matters of faith he talked like a friar. His brain and nerves were constantly overwrought, and he spoke with excessive vehemence. All hated him for his austere temper and all obeyed him out of fear; but he was a poor judge of men, and rarely chose a fitting instrument to carry out his plans.

Olivares, who was born at Rome while his father was Spanish ambassador to the Pope, was of an ancient and distinguished family of great wealth. He had resided in Seville, where his father had been governor of the Alcazar, or royal palace. He had shown himself a patron of artists and men of letters; and as the studio of the good Pacheco was the favorite meeting place of painters and scholars, Olivares had learned to know well the master of Velasquez;

and to know Pacheco seems to have been to like him. In 1615, De Lerma had made Olivares chamberlain to the Prince of the Asturias, the heir to the throne. As such he not only superintended the Prince's education and the conduct of his establishment, but organized all his pleasures. His one idea was to secure dominion over the Infante's mind. So, he not only encouraged his natural fondness for the chase, but arranged for him the facile amours in which the youth delighted. He gradually won complete control over the Prince, so that when the latter reached the throne all affairs of state were entrusted to the minister, the monarch even yielding up to him the royal signet. For all practical purposes Olivares was the ruler, and the King was but his clerk. All officers were appointed by him; all the revenues of the realm passed through his hands; questions of peace and war were settled by him alone; and his ambitious voice was always for war.

Meanwhile the young king was conscientiously doing his duty, as he thought. Six hours each day he worked with his minister, despatching the affairs of state. But unhappily he saw only through Olivares' eyes, and was in reality but his emanuensis.

Strange to say, exactly a similar condition of affairs existed beyond the Pyrenees. The feeble Louis XIII was equally under the dominion of Richelieu, and while he, too, worked every day with his minister, it was the great Cardinal who settled every question of importance. And both ministers devoted their talents to the task of sowing dissension between the King and his family. With Richelieu it was the ambition of the Queen Mother that was to be dreaded, and the Cardinal used all of his more than fox-like cunning to keep son and mother embroiled. In Spain the danger was with the wife. Queen Isabella de Bourbon, a daughter of Henry the Fourth of France, had inherited much of her father's abilities, and was immeasurably su-

perior to the King. Olivares justly feared her influence, and to counteract it led the King from one transitory amour to another, thus stirring up continual strife between the royal pair. The King, though amorous, was most inconstant, and none of his favorites acquired any influence over him, or threatened the power of his omnipotent minister. Given up to his love affairs and to the pleasure of the chase, he reserved for himself little part in the affairs of state except the patronage of the fine arts, of which he was an intelligent judge. In fact, his deficiency seems to have been not so much of the mind as of the will.

Meanwhile two daughters had been born to Velasquez, Francisca on the 18th of May, 1619, and Ignacia on the 19th of January, 1621. The latter died in infancy, the former lived to become the wife of Juan Bautista Martinez del Mazo, who was to paint so many of the pictures that have been attributed to his great father-in-law.

With Olivares in power, Pacheco, who was the first to realize his pupil's genius, thought that it was a good time for Velasquez to try his fortunes in the capital. Moreover, Pacheco's old friend, the poet Francisco de Rioja, was in office under Olivares, and much in favor with the minister. So, in April, 1622, Velasquez arrived at Madrid, a young man of twenty-two, bearing letters from his master. He was kindly received by Don Luis and Don Melchor del Alcazar, who were hidalgos of distinction and influence. A still more useful friend he found in Don Juan de Fonseca y Figueroa, formerly Canon of Seville, who occupied the important post of *Sumiller de Cortina* to the King, and whose duty it was to attend the sovereign at the Mass, and raise and lower the curtain in the royal chapel. This brought him much in contact with Philip, and he tried to get the King to sit for his portrait to the young Sevillian. The Monarch, however, could not find time, and after painting a portrait of the poet Luis de Góngora, whose artificial

and fantastic style did so much to spoil his country's literature, but who was then in high favor, Velasquez returned to Seville. The portrait cannot now be identified with certainty.

But Fonseca proved a faithful friend, and his friendship was the tide in Velasquez's affairs that led him on to fortune. Shortly after the young man had gone back home, Fonseca was sent on a mission to Italy. On his return, however, he sent Velasquez fifty ducats for his traveling expenses, and invited him to return to Madrid. The painter hastened to obey; and this time he was accompanied by Pacheco, whose position and influence could not fail to be of value in pushing the fortunes of his son-in-law at court. Fonseca took Velasquez to lodge in his own house. Here the first work of the youth was to paint the portrait of his kind host. This was seen by a son of Count Peñaranda, Chamberlain to the Infante Don Fernando, brother to the King. He was so pleased with it that he carried it to the palace. Here it excited the greatest admiration, and it was agreed that Velasquez should paint the Infante. But the more they looked at the portrait the more they liked it, and finally the King himself determined that he would sit in his brother's place. The actual painting of the picture was delayed, however, by the visit of the Prince of Wales, afterward Charles I, who had come to Spain, seeking the hand of the Infanta Maria, sister to the King. After spending six months in Madrid, Charles returned to England without the bride he sought. Before leaving he sat to Velasquez, who made a sketch that was to be the basis of a portrait. For this he received one hundred escudos. It has unhappily disappeared. It would be interesting to see how Charles, whose features we know so well portrayed by Van Dyck's flattering brush, really looked when viewed by the searching eyes of the greatest of realists.

On August 30, 1623, three days before Charles set out on his return to England, Philip gave Velasquez his first sitting. Unhappily the picture has disappeared; but it seems to have been a life sized equestrian portrait with a landscape background. It was exhibited in the Calle Mayor opposite the Church of San Felipe, and excited great enthusiasm. Olivares declared that this was the first portrait of the King that had been painted; that all others should be removed from the Palace, and that no one else should ever paint his Majesty; and he invited Velasquez to bring his family to the capital. The King granted the painter a stipend of twenty ducats per month, with additional pay for each picture. This stipend was in 1640 increased to 500 ducats per annum. As the Spanish ducat was worth only about sixty-five cents, this salary was meager enough. He also conferred upon him an ecclesiastical sinecure that brought him three hundred ducats a year from the revenues of the Church. The money, however, he did not receive until three years later, when Pope Urban VIII granted the necessary dispensation. This was not such a perversion of sacred funds as it appears now. In those days, when painters devoted their talents chiefly to the service of religion, it was natural that the Church should contribute to their support. Let us hope that the Church was a better paymaster than the King; for the latter's treasury was always empty, and the artist's salary was always in arrears.

Thus at the early age of twenty-three, Velasquez was installed as the favorite painter of a monarch of eighteen, and began his long service of thirty-seven years, the most dreary service to which any master of the brush was ever condemned, painting continually the expressionless features of the King and his still more unattractive family. Probably there was never a time in all those years when he did not have a portrait of Philip upon his easel.

When Philip II made Madrid his capital, he granted building sites on the singular condition that the King should have the right to lodge anyone he pleased in the second floor of any house. This enabled him to provide shelter for his enormous court at a trifling expense. At the same time it ruined the appearance of the city; for to escape this onerous burden the majority of the houses were built of only one story, so that Madrid bore little resemblance to the stately capital that we see to-day. As Velasquez became one of the royal painters, he was no doubt provided for in the accustomed manner; where, we do not know. We only know that in 1626 he was given lodgings valued at 200 ducats per year, and that when thirty years of age he was lodged in the house of Pedro de Yta, in the Calle de Concepcion Gerónima. His studio was in the eastern wing of the Palace, in the part called Casa del Tesoro, or Treasury. It was the old Alcazar, which was burned in 1734, and which stood where the present royal palace now stands. It was a gloomy old pile, dark and sinister, as had been most of the men who had lived and ruled within its blood-stained walls. The pictures were all in narrow frames of funereal black. Even the glorious Titians were so treated, and the light that fell upon them was insufficient to reveal their beauties. In this great, rambling edifice of more than five hundred chambers were not merely the apartments of the royal family, but the government offices.

The life that was led there was as gloomy as the building. An oppressive ceremonial governed every act, and crushed the gladness out of every heart. It was said that the Spanish King knew at the beginning what he should do each day of his life. Most wretched of all was the Queen. Hemmed around on every side by a cruel etiquette, placed under a formidable old dragon of a duenna whose business it was to see that she violated none of the

iron rules of royal decorum, she was virtually a slave kept to ensure a successor to the throne. Her person was so exclusively the King's that no man might touch her on pain of death, even though it were to save her life. Never allowed to do a spontaneous act, she pined away in gilded servitude.

Nor were the others much happier. Without freedom there is no joy. It is not strange that the King had secret passages, so that he might go whither he pleased unhampered by convention, or that he often escaped from the unbearable ceremonial of his court to his hunting lodges, where in the pursuits of the chase he could be a man.

The friendship between Philip and his painter, which was to be ever strengthened by the passage of the years and to be broken only by the artist's death at the age of sixty, began as soon as they met. The King would come through the secret passage that led to Velasquez's studio, and there he would spend many hours in pleasant converse with the artist. A special chair was provided for him, in which no one else was allowed to sit. What they talked about we do not know; but we do know that Velasquez's influence was only for good, and that, raised by the greatness of his genius and the security of his position above professional jealousy, he did all in his power to advance the fortunes of his brother artists. The King had practised painting himself, and while he had attained to no proficiency, his studies had given him an intelligent comprehension of the art. With Velasquez he could lay aside the oppressive grandeur of his office, and talk as man to man, secure in the loyalty and discretion of his friend. And when he went upon his hunting expeditions, he frequently took the master with him.

When Velasquez was made painter to the King, he found three others holding a similar office,— Bartolomé Gonzales, an indifferent native artist, and Vincenzo Carducho and

Eugenio Caxesi, two Florentines who practised in the manner of the Italian decadence. When Gonzales died in 1627, he was succeeded by another Tuscan, Angelo Nardi, of the same school.

All of these men were jealous of the rising star. To their washed-out idealism his vigorous naturalism was not merely hateful, but an object of contempt. They reproached Velasquez with being only a painter of heads. When the criticism was reported to him, he smilingly answered: "These gentlemen pay me a great compliment. At least, I know no one who can paint a good head," and he never manifested the slightest resentment in exchange for their ill-will. In 1633, Carducho published a book in support of his views. He does not so much as mention his illustrious rival; but he speaks of realism and portraiture in terms of contempt.

Finally, to put a stop to their recriminations, Philip proposed a competition between his four court painters. He assigned for a subject the expulsion of the Moriscos in 1609. It showed how narrow-minded and bigoted he was, thus to choose Spain's most infamous and most disastrous act — the banishment from their homes of a whole people who were loyal to their rulers and whose industry secured to their country a prosperity that Spain was never to know again. It was a subject, too, apparently not well suited to Velasquez's talents. The judges were the Roman artist Crescenzi and Fray Juan Bautista Mayno, pupil of El Greco, and drawing master to the King. They awarded the palm to Velasquez, and if he was further annoyed by his feeble rivals, we do not know it. The picture that he painted has disappeared.

In the meantime Velasquez was industriously painting the portraits of the King and of the royal circle. Of all the men in history Philip is perhaps the one whose appearance we know best. From youth to age he was incessantly

painted by one of the greatest masters of the brush and the most unsparing of realists. Velasquez could not flatter if he would. He was a painter of the eye, not of the mind. He could paint only what he saw and as he saw it. So, he gives us Philip exactly as he was at every period of his life. We see the long, expressionless face, rather handsome though somewhat disfigured by the protruding underjaw of the Hapsburgs, the tall, erect form, marred slightly by the thinness of the legs. As a man he was entitled to respect, despite his failure as a ruler. Kind and just in his disposition, he was unusually tolerant for a Spaniard of his day. His self-control was so remarkable that he never gave way to anger, and laughed only three times during his long life. He was a patron not only of the arts, but of literature. He favored Calderon, Quevedo and Rioja, as well as various writers of lesser note. In the conduct of public affairs he was thrown into the background by his minister, but in the matter of dress he worked great reforms. The costumes of his predecessors, with the great ruffs and other ungainly extravagances, he swept away by royal decree, substituting instead the comparatively simple and graceful dress with the turn-over collars that we see in Velasquez's portraits. Unhappily his reforms did not extend to the ladies, who went about in horrible skirts so big that they seemed to move in the center of a hogshead.

The King had two younger brothers. Don Carlos was an abler man that he, who saw the danger of Olivares' course, and would have overthrown him; but he was kept in the background by the minister, and even prevented from marriage by a thousand negotiations which, while apparently directed toward securing him a suitable wife, were in fact so conducted that no conclusion was ever reached. He was short-lived, and when he died in 1632, it was suspected that Olivares had poisoned him. The other brother, Don Fernando, had taken holy orders, and was a cardinal.

However great were the faults of Olivares, he was to the end a true friend to Velasquez; and to the painter's honor be it remembered that Velasquez was faithful to him even in disgrace. When he fell from power and was banished to Toro, when he had lost the favor of the King and was shunned as a leper, the great painter continued to visit him in his exile. No doubt Philip appreciated the magnanimity of his conduct, for no loss of favor ensued.

The portraits, even of these early days, are among the marvels of art. In their merciless realism, so different from the courtly flattery that made Van Dyck the favorite of the great, Velasquez reveals to us the degenerate and sinister faces about him with remorseless truth. As Mr. Calvert well says, "There was never a deadlier satirist than Velasquez, for he tells us the truth about a King and a court to whom the truth was deadly."

For some years after his arrival in Madrid, Velasquez painted nothing but portraits. These are somewhat hard in modeling and low in color, but intensely vital. But in 1628 an important event in his life took place. Rubens, then at the height of his fame, came to the Spanish court as emissary of the Vice-Regent of Flanders. For nine months he remained, discussing the political situation and painting the portraits of the royal family for his mistress, the Infanta Isabella. He and Velasquez became fast friends, and were much in one another's company. Velasquez was but twenty-nine, while the great Fleming was past fifty; but they had much in common. Together they visited the Escorial and all the art treasures of the royal palaces. It is strange that the companionship and example of so great a man should have had no influence on Velasquez's style of painting. It proves how great was the Spaniard's sincerity. He painted exactly as he saw things, and in the way that seemed to him best to express his vision. He seems to have had no tricks of the brush. He

simply tried to be true to himself, to what his own eye revealed to him.

But if association with Rubens did not change his technic to any appreciable degree, Velasquez would have been less than human if his mental range had not been broadened by contact with a man of such vast information, such varied experience, and such breadth of view. It is probably to Rubens' influence that we owe *Los Borrachos,* Velasquez's masterpiece in his first manner. Rubens no doubt urged him to branch out and do something more than mere portraits, and it is not impossible that he suggested the subject. But in the execution what a contrast with what the visitor would have done! Instead of the splendid color, the joy of the wine-cup, the exuberance of animal life that Rubens gives us in similar scenes, we have a picture painted in low brown tones, and with no sense of gladness. Spain is the most temperate of all Christian lands. To call a Spaniard a *borracho,* a drunkard, is an offense that must be followed by a blow, like *lâche* in French and *liar* in English. And so, Velasquez approaches his topers with none of the sympathy that Rubens felt. In his eyes they are only making beasts of themselves. The Bacchus who sits in their midst is but a commonplace youth without beauty of form or dignity of aspect, while his votaries show us the degradation, not the exhilaration, of the wine-cup. It is a picture that any temperance society might hang upon its walls. Velasquez painted it thus, not as a moral lesson, but because it was thus he felt in the presence of intoxication, and his sincerity was such that he could only paint as he saw and felt. But with what realistic power does he represent these topers! In all the range of art, there is nothing that lives before our eyes with a more compelling power. When we look at them we understand the truth of the remark that Velasquez did not paint his pictures, he willed them on the canvas. These figures seem

absolutely alive. But the picture has strange limitations. It represents a scene out of doors, yet it was painted in the studio, with the light falling upon the group through a window on the left, and with no attempt at the diffused illumination of the open air. The painting, too, is as hard as it is strong. The picture was paid for under the title of *Bacchus* on July 22, 1629, not long after Rubens had left for the North. It was probably finished or far on its way toward completion when he departed, and he must have been astonished at the work, so powerful, and yet so different from his own genial presentation of the favorite vice of his people.

Another result of Rubens' visit was Velasquez's first journey to Italy. The master does not seem to have been a man of active mind. He was a painter by temperament, not by reflection. He had the cunning hand and the prehensile eye of the great painters, and this was his chief equipment. He could paint anything that was set before him just as he saw it, and with what was placed before him he was content. If Rubens had not come to rouse him up, it is quite possible that he would have been satisfied to remain always in Madrid, continually painting the monarch and his royal circle. But Rubens, who had learned so much during his Italian sojourn, thought that his young friend would profit equally by a similar experience, and urged him to go. He also seems to have used his influence with the King and Olivares. The permission was granted, and Velasquez departed in the train of the Marquis of Spinola, who, returning victorious over the Dutch, was going to take charge of the Spanish armies in Italy. The King presented him with 400 silver dollars, while Olivares gave him 200 gold ducats and letters of introduction to many influential people at the Italian courts.

On August 10, 1629, they embarked at Barcelona, and on the 20th they reached Genoa. Velasquez hastened

straight to Venice, whose art he most admired. Here, as everywhere else in Italy, there was intense enmity to Spain. The bigotry and cruelty of the Spaniards had earned them universal hate, which the cunning diplomacy of Richelieu was fanning into flames. Venice was particularly exasperated. A few years before, the Spanish Ambassador, Bedmar, with treachery almost without example even in the annals of Spain, had used his sacred office to incite a conspiracy by which the Doge and the Senators were to be murdered, while the Spanish governor of Milan and the Viceroy of Naples, taking advantage of the confusion that would ensue, should subjugate and plunder the city. Venice was on the point of taking up arms in the crusade that was planned against the Spanish tryanny, and Velasquez found everything intensely hostile. He took up his abode at the Spanish embassy, no doubt as a measure of security, and as he went about he required the protection of a guard.

Velasquez always declared that Titian was the greatest of painters; but if we may judge from his actions, it was Tintoretto, whose impressionistic painting has some affinity with his own, that he really preferred. It is recorded that he spent much time in the Scuola di San Rocco, that he drew much from the *Crucifixion,* and that he copied for Philip IV Tintoretto's *Last Supper.*

But Rome, then the center of the art world, called him with imperious voice. On his way thither he stopped at Ferrara, where he had letters to Cardinal Sacchetti. The Cardinal invited him to put up at his palace; but Velasquez refused on the ground that their dinner hour would not be the same! Not rebuffed by this singular answer, the Cardinal procured him lodgings in town, and fed him from his own table, let us hope at the right hour; and when he left furnished him an escort of honor. Velasquez hurried on to Rome, not making the slight detour necessary to see

Florence and all its marvels of art. This was not so singular as at first it seems, for with the Florentine school the great Spaniard had no affinity.

II

THE DECORATOR

At Rome Velasquez had letters to the powerful Cardinal Barberini, who was a patron of the arts. The Cardinal gave him an apartment in the Vatican, with liberty to visit its treasures of painting and sculpture; but Velasquez, seeing the Villa Medici, craved and received permission to take up his abode in that earthly paradise. There he found not only the charms of nature trained to man's enjoyment, but the antique marbles of Cardinal Ferdinand de' Medici, among which were the *Niobe,* the *Venus de' Medici,* and the *Wrestlers,* now in the Uffizi. Here he painted the two lovely landscapes in the Prado, the only authentic landscapes that we have from his hand, as true as Constable, as delicate as Corot, and wholly modern in their effect and aims. They are only sketches, hastily done, but with so penetrating an observation of the effects of light that they are a joy to the eye and a distinct advance on anything that had gone before.

Like everyone who has dwelt in the Roman villas in the heat of summer, Velasquez found that Paradise was not without its snake. After two months spent in those umbrageous solitudes, he was stricken with fever, and compelled to remove to the neighborhood of the Spanish embassy. Here the ambassador, Monterey, treated him with the greatest kindness, knowing him to be the friend of his King and the protégé of the all-powerful Olivares; and gradually health and strength returned.

At Rome there were many eminent artists, among them Guido, Domenichino, Guercino and Poussin, but it is not recorded that Velasquez met any of them at this time. Still, their influence was not unfelt. A modern of the moderns, it was the painters of his own day rather than the giants of the past who exercised upon him the little influence that his strangely self-centered nature was capable of feeling. Many see in the *Forge of Vulcan* at the Prado and *Joseph's Coat* at the Escorial, the influence of Guido. If so, it is far removed. Only the choice of the subjects, so different from his preceding works, can be traced to Italian influences. In the intense realism, the powerful painting, the plebeian types, the pictures are as far removed as possible from the gracious but rather feeble idealism of the Bolognese. In the *Forge of Vulcan* we have but a group of common blacksmiths, half naked about their forge. Though the picture was painted in Italy, the types are Spanish. Evidently Velasquez used as models menials in the service of the Spanish ambassador. The scene represented is that where Apollo comes to tell Vulcan at his anvil of how Venus is betraying him with Mars. Apollo takes a mischievous delight in the galling communication. The rage of Vulcan is that which any village blacksmith would experience under the circumstances, while his assistants look on with evident satisfaction. The irregular features of the Apollo are anything but divine, while the color is a monotonous brown. Yet so powerful is the modeling of the faces and of the nude forms that the work is a masterpiece. The same may be said of the *Joseph's Coat*. The half naked men who show to Jacob the bloody garment are common shepherds of vulgar type; but figures have rarely been so intensely realized.

From Rome he was called to Naples to paint the portrait of the Infanta Maria, sister to the Spanish King. After her hand had been refused to the Prince of Wales, she had

been married to Ferdinand, King of Hungary, and was now on her way to her new realm. She was naturally in no great hurry to join the husband that she had never seen in his half barbarous land, and among Neapolitan delights she lingered for four months. Her brother, who wanted her likeness now that she was passing from his sight forever, commanded his painter to go to her in all haste. This he did, and in the Palace at Naples he painted the portrait that now adorns the Prado.

In that city Velasquez met the powerful Ribera, who as court painter had charge of matters artistic for the Viceroy. We know that he impressed Velasquez favorably, for it was at Velasquez's suggestion that Philip IV afterward purchased the collection of Ribera's pictures now in the Madrid gallery. But, as in the case of all other painters, Velasquez looked, admired, and went his own way, untouched by the influence of Ribera's example.

After eighteen months in Italy, Velasquez sailed back to Spain. The King and Olivares greeted him with the greatest cordiality, and the master must have been gratified to learn that during his absence the sovereign had allowed no one else to paint the royal portrait.

In his prosperity Velasquez was generous to his brother artists. It was at his suggestion that Alonso Cano, Herrera, Zurbaran and the sculptor, Martinez-Montañes came to Madrid; and by his influence commissions were granted them all. The young Murillo came in 1641, and during the two years of his sojourn in the capital he received from Velasquez every mark of kindness and much good advice, as well as free access to the royal pictures.

In Italy Velasquez had not learned to imitate the style of any painter. He returned as thoroughly individual as when he left. Yet Italy had not been without its effect. His view of art had broadened. He realized that it was not enough that a picture should tell the truth. It must not

merely convince; it must delight the eye. So the pictures that he painted after his return have a decorative quality unknown before. In their silver-gray harmonies they sometimes make one think of Moretto; but there is nothing to show that Velasquez ever saw any characteristic work of the Brescian master.

Conspicuous among the pictures of the time are the great equestrian portraits of the King, of Olivares and of Balthazar-Carlos, the heir to the throne. It seems probable that the latter was the first painted. He was born October 17, 1629, during the master's Italian sojourn. The Infante was an attractive child. He had inherited the vivacity and intelligence of his mother, and in him the nation's hopes were centered. He is represented as a boy of about seven galloping upon his thickset pony, the baton of command in his hand, and with a look that bespeaks one born to rule. Beyond the brown foreground are the blue masses of the Guadarrama Mountains, a landscape of the stern, severe, but beautiful character that Spain presents, the whole bathed in atmosphere and flooded with silvery light. For Velasquez was the first to realize fully that the light of day is silvery, not golden, as the great masters of the past, preferring beauty to truth, had been accustomed to represent it. And he had the talent to make of this silvery light a thing perhaps as beautiful as the gold of Venice, though necessarily less striking. Certainly his silver harmonies do not weary the eyes, but grow in favor with continued study; and there are many who prefer them to the golden glories of Titian.

Olivares is depicted on a rearing charger, clad in armor, in his hand the marshal's baton with which he is directing the movements of an unseen army. In the background is a far-reaching plain, from which there floats the smoke of battle. The minister, who in the pursuit of his vain ambition sent countless thousands to their death, had never seen

even a skirmish; but to the amusement of the court he loved to be considered a distinguished soldier. No doubt Velasquez painted him thus by his command; but there is no flattery in depicting his hard features.

Of the three, all surpassingly fine, Philip's is perhaps the best. The most accomplished horseman in Spain, possessing a high sense of his royal dignity, he rides his prancing steed like a king, while behind him we see again the Guadarrama Mountains, blue in the distance. This picture illustrates one of the peculiarities of Velasquez. A strip of canvas is sewed on at each side, showing that when he had drawn the figure he realized that the space was too narrow. These enlargements and the numerous repaintings and alterations in his work which a minute examination discloses, show that his fashion of painting directly on to the canvas without preliminary studies had its disadvantages; but no doubt we are indebted to it for much of his supreme truthfulness.

In these three portraits, with their galloping horses, Velasquez comes perhaps nearer to the presentation of motion than in any other work. It is strange that in all his pictures there is scarcely any movement. He is content to depict men and women seated or quietly standing. No other great painter was ever satisfied with a range so narrow. But despite the limitations of his sphere, his realistic power and the distinction of his style make him one of the greatest masters. Indeed, style is perhaps his supreme gift.

The horses painted by Velasquez are of such peculiar forms, with their small heads and heavy bodies that they hardly seem possible. Yet there is no doubt that they are as real as their riders. The breed has disappeared, and has been everywhere superseded by the long-bodied English type; but there can be no question that it once existed; and was greatly esteemed. It appears in too many contemporary pictures to be doubted. In Velasquez's case the

heaviness of the horses that he paints was aggravated by their idleness. A horse which the King had once ridden could never be mounted by another; and as he could not give proper exercise to the many animals in his enormous stables, they fattened unduly.

About 1638 or 1639, Velasquez painted his *Crucifixion,* in the Prado. It is a picture which his most violent partisans condemn, because it is neither realistic nor impressionistic, but classically beautiful. Spain is the land of crucifixions. Nowhere else are they so numerous or so horrible. In the *autos da fe,* where luckless heretics were continually perishing in slow agony at the stake, in the bull ring, in the judicial and inquisitorial tortures of the time, the people supped full of horrors until they acquired the taste. But this sort of thing was hateful to Velasquez. Serene by nature, he abhorred the sight of souls and bodies in pain. Complaint has been made of his Christ that the body holds not the position of one hanging from the cross. This is true; but if the critics will only look they will perceive that he is not hanging by his hands, but standing upon the broad support to which his feet are nailed. He was probably painted thus because of Velasquez's inability to paint anything that was not before him. All his models are in attitudes that can be indefinitely retained. But a man cannot be kept hanging by his hands indefinitely, and so the standing posture had to be resorted to. Yet we confess that we can see in the picture only reasons for admiration. The form is one of the most perfect in art, worthy of a Grecian chisel; it is magnificently painted; and the head, bowed in death, with the long hair falling over the face, is a thing of infinite pathos.

The *Christ bound to the Column,* now in the National Gallery, is less satisfactory. Face and form are less distinguished, indeed verging on the plebeian. The attendant angel is a commonplace Spanish woman, who looks on

without conviction, and to whose shoulders wings have been awkwardly attached. But the face of Christ, who has undergone the scourging and has sunk down, broken and exhausted, beside the column, is most pathetic.

Velasquez was to remain at court from 1631 to 1649, ever growing in favor with the monarch and continually advancing in artistic power. In 1627 he had been made Usher of the Chamber; in 1633 he was given the benefit of the paso de vara de alguacil; in 1634 he was made an officer of the Wardrobe; in 1643 he was made Groom of the King's Chamber; in 1647 he was appointed Inspector of the Royal Buildings. Yet such were the iron rules of court etiquette that this gentleman of ancient lineage, this close friend of the King, was on public occasions classed, by reason of his office as painter, with the royal buffoons and servants. Thus on September 18, 1628, the King granted him "the daily ration of a chamber barber"; and in 1643, the year in which he was made groom of the chamber, a great bull fight was given in the Plaza Mayor, and among the directions we read: "Velasquez is to be put in the fourth tier with the servants of grandees, the barbers of the Palace and other underlings." Again, it is said in an entry of September 15, 1637: "The clothes of the barbers and of Diego are to be reduced to 80 ducats." In the eyes of the Spanish court, a painter, however great, was but a menial. No wonder that he later on sought the burdensome post of *Aposentador Mayor,* to save himself from such humiliations.

On his return from Italy, Velasquez found the King in dire straits for money. The countless wars that Olivares had fomented, always with consequences disastrous for his country, had drained the treasury of every ducat. All salaries were in arrears. Even the royal body-guard had not been paid for three years. But the King must be amused, lest he should turn his attention to affairs of State.

From his father he had inherited an inordinate love of hunting, and upon the sport enormous sums were squandered, while the armies that defended Spain's far-flung possessions were disbanding for want of pay. On these expeditions Philip usually carried Velasquez, to entertain him by conversation, and to paint his portrait and the scenes of the chase. One of these scenes only has survived, the *Boar Hunt,* in the National Gallery. The sport seems to be tame enough, a number of mounted men tormenting a boar in an enclosure whence he cannot escape, and in the presence of the queen and ladies, who are in carriages within the wall, while humbler persons look on from the outside. It is no great picture, but good enough for the subject.

In the forest of El Pardo some six miles north of Madrid (not to be confounded with the Prado, where is now the royal picture gallery), the King had a hunting lodge, La Torre de la Parada, to which he often retired to indulge in his favorite pastime, and to escape the intolerable ceremonial of the Spanish court, which made life burdensome to sovereign and courtiers alike.

Olivares undertook to surprise Philip by giving him an arena for his favorite sport close at hand. Near where the Prado now stands, the minister had a park. This he enlarged till it embraced a square mile. In this he built a palace called the *Buen Retiro,* with a chapel and theater attached, while he stocked the park with game. All was done in such secrecy that the King knew nothing of it until in 1634 the Minister presented the gift, which seemed a fairy palace sprung from earth at the touch of Aladdin's Lamp. The delighted monarch took possession, and opened it with a tournament in which he jousted with Olivares.

For the decoration of this kingly retreat, Velasquez painted one of his masterpieces, probably the greatest of historical pictures and perhaps the only one that gives real

pleasure; for nothing can be drearier than the average historical picture. One of the few successes of Philip's arms had been the surrender of Breda, when the Marquis of Spinola, Spain's Italian general, had compelled Justin of Nassau to give up that important fortress. Spinola had died of a broken heart after his defeat at Casale; but Velasquez had crossed the sea with him, and there must have been many portraits of so distinguished a man, so that his features are no doubt truthfully portrayed. Everybody remembers the wonderful picture — how in the presence of the opposing armies Justin bows to present the key of the fortress that he has defended with so much courage; the kindly and gracious dignity with which the conqueror lays his hand upon his adversary's shoulder as he speaks to him words of courtesy and praise; the far-reaching plains of Holland bathed in atmosphere and darkened by the smoke of burning villages; above all, the lances that cut the sky in so decorative a pattern, and which have given to the picture its Spanish name of *Las Lanzas*. This is the masterpiece of Velasquez's second period, the most decorative and therefore the most popular of all his works. As realistic as *Los Borrachos,* it is not merely true to nature, but is a thing of beauty.

The faces that Velasquez paints are in general the least expressive that were ever depicted. This is partly because the subjects lacked both character and intelligence and partly because the ideal of the Spanish hidalgos was to appear on all public occasions utterly impassive. Their supreme idea was to maintain their personal dignity. And it must be remembered that Velasquez was himself a Spanish nobleman, who shared his countrymen's conception of dignity as entire imperturbability. His achievement in lending an interest to these wooden faces, without expression and without beauty, is one of the rarest triumphs of art.

We have no time to dwell upon the numerous portraits

that Velasquez painted during these fruitful years between his Italian journeys; yet a few cannot be passed over. The Infante Balthazar-Carlos was often painted, and one of these is particularly delightful. The boy, dressed as a hunter, with his little gun in his hand and his dog crouched beside him, stands beneath a tree, while beyond him are the blue mountains. It is a charming portrait of a charming child, unhappily too short lived. And rarely has more depended upon the life of a boy. His death left the throne to his feeble brother Charles, the last degenerate scion of a dying line, in whom the protruding lower jaw of the Hapsburgs was so exaggerated that he could not chew his food, too enervated to continue the family, whose death exposed his country to the War of the Spanish Succession, that final disaster that consummated the ruin of Spain.

In many pictures by Velasquez, the favorite dog of the sitter is introduced; and perhaps no one has ever equaled Velasquez as a painter of dogs. Not only the physical aspect of the animal is presented with faultless accuracy; but its inmost soul, with all its unutterable and unquestioning love for its master, is bodied forth, with no sentimentality, but with perfect truth.

It was propably about this time that Velasquez painted the Admiral Pulido de Pareja of the National Gallery. Señor Beruete, who has devoted his life to the study of Velasquez, and has added so much to our knowledge of the painter and his works, attributes this to Mazo; but most critics believe that the truculent figure is by the master. Palomino tells us that when the King saw it he took it for the Admiral himself, and abused him for not being at his post in the Indies — a royal jest that must have given much pleasure to the painter.

Velasquez rarely had an opportunity to paint women. The Spaniards kept their women in a half Oriental seclusion, and would not permit them to sit for their portraits

to any man. It is only the Queen and her daughters, whose position made them public personages, who are regularly painted. But there are two female portraits of this period that are supremely fine, the *Lady* at Berlin and the *Lady with the Fan,* in the Wallace Collection. Many persons esteem the latter the finest portrait ever made of a woman. It is presented with all the realistic power of the master, and in the features and pose of this high-born Spanish lady there is a unique distinction. The lady at Berlin, though less beautiful, is high-bred, intelligent and most attractive; she seems to live and breathe before us. So far as we can see, the workmanship is not inferior. Both are much finer than Velasquez's other portrait of a lady in the Prado.

In 1642 the blunders and crimes of Olivares bore their fruit. In his desperate straights for money he undertook to overthrow the privileges of the provinces, privileges which Philip had sworn to respect. Portugal revolted, elected the Duke of Braganza King, and established its independence. The Great Condé at Rocroy crushed the Spanish army, and forever broke the prestige of the invincible infantry of Spain. Catalonia rose in rebellion. The crisis was so urgent that even the fainéant King felt compelled to take the field. He went to Saragossa to assume command of his army; but Olivares diverted him with vain festivities, spending in empty pleasures the money so pressingly demanded for the purposes of the war. And so, after an inglorious sojourn in the capital of Aragon, Philip returned without honor to Madrid.

At last, in 1643, the incapacity of Olivares became apparent even to his royal master. He was dismissed from office, and sent into retirement at Toro, where he died two years later. Perhaps the only man who dared to visit him in his disgrace and openly express affection for the fallen minister was Velasquez; and to the credit of Philip, be it

said, that the master lost nothing of the royal favor by his fidelity to his friend. In this, as in everything else, the conduct of the painter was that of an honorable and loyal gentleman.

The immediate cause of the fall of Olivares seems to have been curious. It was a rule of the prudish court of Spain that while the King might have as many illegitimate children as he pleased and confer upon them titles of nobility, none of them could enter the capital. Olivares had no lawful heir, but a natural son named Julianillo, and he wished to make Julianillo an officer of State. This was too much; and upon this punctilio the man who had with impunity wrecked his country's fortunes fell from power.

At first Philip announced that he would be his own prime minister, and he undertook to hold the reins of government himself. Soon, however, they slipped from his feeble hands, and the place of Olivares was filled by his nephew, Don Luis de Haro, though with authority less absolute; and the King returned to the chase. In his domestic affairs the fall of Olivares caused a happy revolution. The dissension which the designing minister had continually sown between the King and Queen passed away. Philip realized for the first time the worth of the superior woman whom he had so long neglected for ignoble favorites. Unhappily it was too late. Worn out by vexations and humiliations, she died the following year.

That indeed was a year of disaster for Spain. The evil that Olivares had done lived after him. Everywhere the Spanish armies were beaten back. Perpignan and Roussillon, two of her fairest possessions, were seized by France and lost to Spain forever. The King again found it necessary to take the field to check the revolt in Catalonia. He advanced to the frontier town of Fraga, and here he had his portrait painted by Velasquez. After this exploit he returned to the capital, while the war went on.

In 1646 a still greater disaster came to the afflicted country. The Infante Don Balthazar-Carlos, in whom all the nation's hopes were bound up, died at Saragossa, after a short illness, leaving the throne without a male heir. A youth of seventeen, he had gone thither with the King to superintend the operations against the revolted Catalans. His father was heart-broken; but with that fine fortitude which was his noblest characteristic, he wrote to the Marquis of Leganés, commander of the army in the field:

"*Marquis:* We must all of us yield to God's will, and I more than others. It has pleased him to take my son from me about an hour ago. Mine is such grief as you can conceive at such a loss, but also full of resignation in the hand of God and courage and resolution to provide for the defense of my lands, for they also are my children. . . . And so I beseech you not to relax in the operations of this campaign until Lerida is relieved."

While the troops were unpaid and the glory of Spain was everywhere on the wane, the King continued his building operations. By 1648 the New Alcazar was finished, and for this and the Torre de la Parada, the royal hunting lodge in the forest of El Pardo, decorations were required. So it was resolved to send Velasquez to Italy to buy pictures, to procure casts of antique statues, and to persuade Italian artists to enter the service of the King,—a service which was not popular owing to the uncertainty of payment. The order for his expenses was made on the 18th of May, 1648; but it was not until October 6th that money was found to meet it. Then, as an embassy was being prepared to bring to Spain the new queen, Mariana of Austria, Velasquez's departure was further deferred that he might sail with it. Instead of seeking to enrich the impoverished blood of the Spanish sovereigns by wedding with a more vigorous stock, the King had chosen his own

niece, a frail girl of fourteen, to be his wife, with disastrous consequences too easily to be foreseen, and the inglorious extinction of his royal line.

It was not until January 2, 1649, that the embassy set sail. Barcelona was in the hands of the insurgents, the other eastern ports devastated by the plague; so they had to embark from Malaga, and only after a tempestuous voyage of five weeks did they land at Genoa.

III

THE IMPRESSIONIST

VELASQUEZ reached Venice on April 21st, having stopped at Milan and Padua. He hoped to secure valuable works of art; but he arrived too late. The Signory, seeing that in the city's decline its impoverished nobles and clergy were disposing of the masterpieces that were its greatest ornament, had made a law forbidding the sale of any notable picture on pain of death. So Velasquez secured only Paul Veronese's *Venus and Adonis,* a *Sea Fight,* the *Purification of the Daughters of Midian* and some portraits by Tintoretto and a sketch of his huge *Paradise* in the Hall of the Great Council.

From Venice he was called to Naples, to present his letters to the Count Oñata, the Viceroy, who had been instructed to give him all assistance. He found Naples in a state of sullen misery. Don John of Austria, the son of Philip IV by the actress, La Calderona, who had been named after Philip II's illegitimate son, the hero of Lepanto, had put down the insurrection of Masaniello with truly Spanish cruelty. Velasquez also found his friend Ribera in despair. His beautiful daughter, Maria Rosa, his favorite model for the Madonna, had been seduced and

carried off by Don John. So great was Ribera's shame and sorrow that he never recovered from the blow, and finally died of a broken heart. Naples under such conditions was no pleasant sojourn; and so, after despatching his business, Velasquez moved on to Rome, for the jubilee of 1650.

On his former visit to the Eternal City he seems to have ignored its resident artists; but this time, as a large part of his mission was to get painters and sculptors to decorate the royal palaces, he mingled much in their society. That he made a good impression is shown by Marco Boschini's statement that he was "the mirror of a courteous and distinguished cavalier." This is the more creditable to him because the cruelties of Don John at Naples had still further embittered the hatred that the Italians felt for their Spanish conquerors, and rendered them indisposed to speak well of any of his race. At Rome he met Poussin, then an old man, Salvator Rosa, Bernini, Algardi, and many other artists of lesser note. Here he had that conversation with Salvator Rosa which Boschini reports, in which he said that Raphael "pleased him not at all." Surely he had not seen Raphael's portraits of Julius II and Leo X at Florence, in which he would have found a realism equal to his own. It was natural that Raphael's idealism should have awakened no sympathy in the breast of the great realist, as it awakens none in the bosom of many a realist of our day.

Upon the papal throne Velasquez found Cardinal Pamphili, who had assumed the name of Innocent X as if in bitter jest. His election had been opposed both on account of his sinister character and his evil countenance. He was fully aware of his unattractive appearance, and it is said that he once drove from his presence the nephew of his sister-in-law and mistress, Olympia Maldachini, calling him "an ugly whelp, even uglier and clumsier than I am." In

an unlucky hour for himself he called in the greatest and most remorseless of realists to paint his portrait.

When the commission came, Velasquez, who had not touched his brushes since leaving Spain, felt that he was out of practice; and so, to get his hand in, he painted first the portrait of his Morisco slave, Juan de Pareja, seven years younger than himself. The portrait proved to be a masterpiece. It was hung in the annual exhibition of pictures then shown in the cloisters of the Pantheon, and aroused universal enthusiasm. Andreas Schmidt, a German artist resident in Rome, writes, "All the other work seemed painting, this alone, truth." Velasquez was at once elected by the Roman artists a member of the Academy of St. Luke.

Reassured by the success of this picture, he turned to his task, and painted what is perhaps the greatest of all his portraits, certainly the most terrible portrait ever made. The Pope was 74 years old, but vigorous in health and of a florid complexion. Velasquez made of his portrait a symphony in red, as Whistler would call it. His red face surmounted by a red cap, stands out against a red chair and a redder curtain, while his garments are red, relieved only by the white of his linen. The countenance is sinister, cunning, powerful, remorseless, the countenance of a man who allows no human weakness, no scruples of conscience, to stand between him and the object of his ambition. There he sits in the Doria-Pamphili Palace, leaving to future ages the record of an evil life. When the old man saw it, he remarked, "Troppo vero," "too true"; but he was pleased, and rewarded the painter with a chain of gold and a medal. Whether he paid him also in money is in dispute. One version says that he sent the price of the picture by his chamberlain, and that Velasquez refused to receive it so, saying that the King, his master, always paid him with his own hand; and that the Pontiff then sent for

him, and handed him the money himself. The other version is, that Velasquez refused to accept payment, saying that the King had already paid him. At any rate, he was himself pleased with the work, for it is one of the three pictures that he signed, subscribing his name on the letter that Innocent holds out. Sir Joshua Reynolds, at a time when Velasquez had been almost forgotten, saw the picture, and pronounced it the best portrait in Rome.

In this jubilee year the collection of antique statues in the Capitol was opened, and from these and the sculptures of the Vatican Velasquez chose wisely, having casts or molds made which he carried back with him to Spain.

In the matter of his return Velasquez displayed a singular independence. On February 17, 1650, after the painter had been gone a year, Philip wrote to his ambassador, the Duke del Infantado: "As you know his phlegmatic disposition, order him not to prolong his stay any longer." One would suppose that such a command from a despotic monarch would be instantly obeyed; but Velasquez paid no attention to it; and on June 22nd, the King again writes: "If he has not started already, which I doubt, it would be well if you pressed him not to put off his departure for a minute." Yet in spite of all this, the master lingered in Italy for a year longer; reluctant to renounce the bright freedom of Italian life for the cloistral gloom of the Spanish court. Still, he had finally to go; and he embarked at Genoa in June, 1651, and after a stormy voyage landed on his native shores.

Notwithstanding his disobedience, Philip greeted him with his accustomed favor, and in November following paid him his salary for all the time of his absence. Velasquez's first task was to paint the pallid features and flaxen hair of Mariana of Austria, the new Queen, who had come while he was gone. He made several portraits of her, so that her white face and unattractive figure, clothed in the

preposterous garments of her day, are familiar. Despite her appearance, she was lively and fond of practical jokes, such as turning loose a lot of mice among the ladies of her court, to see them jump about and climb on chairs with their hogshead skirts. It is recorded that her duenna had to reprove her for laughing too loud — a sound rarely heard in those grim chambers, so dark that the great Titians upon the walls could scarcely be seen. But the union was one that heaven could never bless. The daughter of Philip's beloved sister Mary, Empress of Austria, Mariana had been betrothed to Balthazar-Carlos; but when that unhappy prince died Philip concluded to take her for himself. From a marriage between niece and uncle no good could be expected, even if both parties were of purest blood; but when, as in this case, both were degenerates, the deplorable result was easy to foresee. The King was madly in love with her, and showed toward her a fidelity strangely at variance with his treatment of the former queen. She bore him four children, each feebler than the other; Margarita, whom Velasquez has immortalized in many pictures, particularly in his masterpiece, *Las Meniñas;* Philip Prosper, whom he painted in the fine work now in the Museum at Boston, epileptic and hydrocephalous, of whom Querini says that he was "lethargic and colorless, after the Austrian manner, with a large head and little strength in his knees," and who died when four years of age; Ferdinand Thomas, who lived but two years; and Carlos, born after Velasquez's death, who succeeded his father on the throne, and was the last of his race. When she came to Spain, a capricious child of fourteen, to be the spoiled darling of a husband thirty years her senior, Mariana's evil disposition and want of intelligence were covered by her youth; but during her long regency as guardian of her imbecile son they had full play, and under

her guidance Spain sank to the lowest point of her incredible abasement.

A year after his return, Velasquez, upon his own petition, received the important office of *Aposentador Mayor,* or marshal of the palace. It was a position of great labor and responsibility. He had to look after the management of the royal dwellings; to furnish light, heat and food; to assign the apartments; to organize the festivities of the court; to act as quartermaster during the royal journeys; and to do many other things beside. Two motives probably led him to undertake these burdensome duties: a salary of about two thousand dollars was attached to the office, and then it raised him out of the rank of the buffoons and servants with whom he had formerly been classed — a position that must have been galling to one of his dignity and pride. The office, too, gave him and his family apartments in the Palace.

Velasquez was well fitted for his onerous position. Handsome in person, of erect carriage and dignified manners, wearing his rich garments like a prince, he was a suitable man to lead any court function. His duties were such as often to arouse the resentment of the punctilious inmates of the palace, always ready to take offense at anything that could be construed into a want of regard for their dignity; but the calm suavity of the master disarmed their wrath, while his justice gave them no cause to complain. The office was too burdensome to be filled by an indolent Spanish grandee, and so it was conferred upon persons of honorable but lower rank. The aposentador did not possess the right of wearing his hat in the presence of the King. While in the palace he went without hat or sword, but with his cloak about him. The hours of his service were long; for it was his duty to open and to close the palace doors; and in the meantime a thousand details

of administration pressed upon him for attention. The position would have been a hard one under any circumstances; but with an empty treasury and no funds to meet the most urgent necessities, it must have been almost intolerable. But his most terrible trials were upon the journeys of the court. All travelers of the time cry out against the hardships of a journey in Spain. There were no comforts, not even the common necessaries of life, to be found outside the cities. All manner of furniture, beds, bedding, wine and provisions had to be transported on the backs of mules, for there were few roads that even a cart could traverse.

In 1654, as *aposentador mayor,* he attended the removal of the bodies of the royal dead to the sepulchral crypt beneath the great church of the Escorial that had at length been made ready. It was a ghastly sight. While the King and his court looked on, each coffin was opened for inspection before putting it into its final resting place in that splendid but cold and forbidding chamber. Querini, the Venetian envoy, has preserved for us a record of the appearance of the great Emperor Charles V. He says: "The likeness of the Emperor to his portrait could be recognized quite well. He had a rather full, fair beard; the body was under the average size, the bones thin, the flesh dry and meager; nose and lips, fingers and toes were deformed by the gout, which does not even spare the dead."

The King was deeply affected by these evidences of the mortality even of his royal race, and as a propitiatory offering to the shades of his ancestors, he filled the Sacristy of the Escorial with many of his finest pictures, some of which still remain where he had them hung. Among these is the *Joseph's Coat of* Velasquez. Fortunately this is the only one of the master's works hidden in this inaccessible and not too well lighted spot.

As Velasquez returned from the first Italian journey a decorator, so he returned from the second an impressionist. He is the great first impressionist, around whose feet his modern disciples creep. Impressionism is a term that has been used to cover many sins against good taste and common sense; and its aberrations have been so numerous that it is hard to define. With Velasquez it meant a picture presenting a scene as it would be looked at as a whole with the eyes centered on one point of view; a sacrifice of non-essentials to the general effect; a freer way of painting with more liquid pigments and broad brush strokes that show over-much when closely regarded, but which melt into harmony at the proper distance; above all, an insistence upon the atmosphere that surrounds all objects.

Several causes besides his own volition probably contributed to this change. The lengthening vision of age perhaps compelled him to stand farther from his canvas. It is reported that he used brushes so long that he could keep the picture and the sitter at the same focus. If so, it must have been in these later days. The story is probably apocryphal, for as he stands in *Las Meniñas,* his brushes are of no unusual length. Then the unsteadiness of hand that comes with age may have forced him to paint with less minuteness. Haste, too, may have caused him to adopt a more summary method of painting; for the duties of his new office must have left him little time for his art. At any rate, his increase in skill more than keeps pace with the demands upon his time; for the pictures painted after his second voyage to Italy are the finest of all. The method, however, is wholly his own, and owes nothing to Italian examples.

It was his desire to concentrate interest on the point of sight that led Velasquez to paint the hands in so summary a fashion. Most great painters have prided themselves on the beauty of their hands. Velasquez nearly always be-

stows but slight attention on his, lest they lure the eyes of the spectator from the face.

It was probably after his return that he painted the fine portrait of the sculptor Martinez-Montañés, which used to be called Alonso Cano, no one knew why. As a rule Velasquez was singularly unfortunate in his sitters. They are usually sinister or degenerate, and he paints them as they are. Here, however, is a splendid gentleman, honest, intelligent and refined; and the painter shows the fullest appreciation of the nobility of his character.

Velasquez about this time expended his maturest talents on the most unattractive subjects, the deformed dwarfs, the jesters and idiots of the palace. It was not his fault that he painted them. It was one of his duties as court painter. His predecessors had painted the court fools. His successors did the same.

The practice of keeping jesters at court dates from the days of Imperial Rome. But nowhere was it carried to such an extent as in Spain. The gloom of the Spanish court required some relaxation; and it found it in the bitter jests of its buffoons. Its tyranny demanded some freedom of speech, and to the clowns full license was granted. Of Velasquez it must be said that his genius lends an interest even to these wretched beings. He painted them with a skill and insight into character that have never been surpassed. Perhaps the finest of the group is the *Sebastian de Morra,* in whose face can be read all the melancholy of a mind imprisoned in such a body, and made the butt of every ribald jest.

The keeping of dwarfs at court we can understand. Men so deformed often possess a bitter wit. But what degraded taste could have led the King and his courtiers to keep about them the poor idiots whom the master paints, such as the *Idiot of Coria,* and the *Boy of Vallecas,* we cannot imagine. The taste that could take pleasure in

making a mock of such misery is hard to comprehend. It is said that at his birth the Child of Vallecas was of monstrous size and possessed a full set of teeth; but that seems scant reason to preserve his later aspect, when he was but a commonplace, deformed idiot.

The masterpiece of Velasquez, the greatest impressionist picture ever painted, is *Las Meniñas*. It represents Velasquez at his easel, painting a large picture. The Infanta Margarita, born July 12, 1651, the last pale flower of a dying race, five years of age, attended by her maids in waiting (Meniñas), her two hideous dwarfs and her great dog, occupies the center of the composition, and all the interest, all the light is centered on her dainty little figure. The upper half of the picture is filled only with the luminous shadows of the great room. In a mirror at the back the King and Queen are seen, while in an open door, whose bright light contrasted with the darkness of the room is supremely effective, one sees the figure of Don Joseph Nieto, the Queen's quartermaster. Velasquez himself is of noble aspect, a true Spanish gentleman. It is not surprising that Raphael Mengs exclaimed when he looked on this masterpiece, "Velasquez seems not to paint, but to will his figures on the canvas."

It is said that when the King saw it, he declared that one thing was wanting, and taking the brush, he painted on the master's breast the cross of Santiago, one of the most coveted decorations. The King intended well; but he had a hard time carrying out his plan. The Council of the Orders of Santiago, Calatrava and Alcántara when called upon to confirm his action, objected that Velasquez had earned his bread by the labor of his hands and that his ancestry was not noble. To the first charge Velasquez answered that he had never painted save for his own pleasure and in obedience to the King; to the second, by asserting his high descent. Determined that no mere painter

should have such an honor, the council interposed every obstacle. More than a hundred witnesses gave their testimony. Finally an unfavorable report was made on the ground that Velasquez's ancestry was not sufficiently distinguished. Then at last the King procured a dispensation from the Pope, and on July 29, 1659, a little more than a year before the master's death, he received the decoration by royal decree. Even then it was not until November 2nd, and after the King had issued to Velasquez a patent of nobility, that the dress of the order was delivered to him. Unhappily the days that he had to wear it were few.

Another great masterpiece of this period, which some prefer to *Las Meniñas,* is *Las Hilanderas* (*The Weavers*), showing the interior of the royal tapestry factory at Madrid. The colors are the brightest that Velasquez ever used, the painting perhaps the most summary and impressionistic. The modeling of the young woman in front, on whom the full light falls, is marvelous. Here, as in his early picture of *Christ with Mary and Martha,* the master is concerned with showing two rooms, the rear more brightly illuminated; but what a change from that somber production to this gorgeous hymn to light!

Of this time, also, are the full length portraits of two vagabonds, to whom the names of *Mœnippus* and *Æsop* have since been assigned with no reason except the desire of the average man to know what he is looking at. Their execution is of great breadth, especially the head of Æsop; and unattractive as are the subjects, they are among Velasquez's masterpieces.

About this time he painted for the Mirror Room in the Alcazar three mythological pictures that have come down to us and two that perished when the building was burned in 1734.

The *Mars* was perhaps painted to show the master's disgust with the wars that had ruined his country. The

figure is without distinction; the face that of a drunken drill-sergeant. It has well been said that the form is that of a broken-down acrobat. Of course, it is magnificently painted, but nothing can redeem the vulgarity of the conception.

The *Mercury and Argus* is much finer. There is something very tragic in this picture of *Death creeping upon Sleep*. The composition, too, is ingenious, for the canvas is of a shape difficult to handle, very wide in proportion to its height, so that the figures must be presented crouching.

But incomparably the finest of the three is the *Venus*. Owing to the Inquisition's rule that the female form should not be painted undraped, Velasquez had had no opportunity to treat the nude figure of woman. Sir Walter Armstrong says that the Inquisition could not have been so bad after all, and refers to the nude Titians in the Royal Palace as a proof. But that only proves that the King was beyond the Inquisition's reach. Certainly the inhibition was remorselessly enforced against lesser men. Only the King's express command could have protected Velasquez in carrying out such a commission.

It was fortunate indeed that he was commanded to paint it. It is one of the greatest pictures in the world. As we stand before it in the National Gallery two things compel our wonder: How modern it seems, and how intensely it is realized! We can hardly persuade ourselves that it was not painted yesterday, that it is not being exhibited for the first time in this year's salon. We comprehend the truth of the Spanish saying applied to Velasquez's pictures, *Verdad, no pintura,* "Not painting, but truth itself." It seems a living woman that lies there with her back to the spectator — a modern woman whose waist has been confined by the corset, while her muscular limbs tell us that she was perhaps a dancer. The face in the mirror

is but an indistinct reflection, for Velasquez understood that two points of interest in a picture kill one another; and he wished to rivet attention to the supple body that lies so gracefully on the couch. An attempt has been made to transfer this masterpiece also to Mazo, to whom certain critics would give so many pictures usually assigned to Velasquez. It seems incredible, however, that one whose acknowledged works are so inferior should have produced such a wonder.

The master's last two pictures were painted in the service of religion. The extreme admirers of Velasquez speak ill of the *Coronation of the Virgin* because of the loveliness of the Madonna's face, which, though strictly Spanish, yet tells of the Italian quest for ideal beauty. The colors, too, are brighter than he usually employs, though somber as compared with Italian presentations of such a subject, and wanting in harmony. The normal man, however, can look with extreme pleasure upon the pure and exquisite lineaments of the Virgin, and may even regret that the master did not give us more of a similar type. Yet his inability to grasp the ideal is conspicuous even here. The Virgin is but a portrait of a high-bred Spanish dame, and in this supreme moment when other masters reveal her in an ecstasy of joy and gratitude, her handsome lineaments reveal only the pride of birth. In God the Father, too, he has been ill advised. He takes too literally the term "Ancient of Days," and gives us an old man with all the infirmities of age, bald-headed, toothless and red-eyed. The picture was painted for the oratory of Queen Mariana.

The *St. Anthony visiting St. Paul the Hermit,* Velasquez's last picture, all are united in praising. The landscape with its silvery gray tones, its great rock in the foreground, its blue stream and the bluer mountains far away, is a delight to every eye. The venerable faces of the saints, the astonishment of St. Anthony as the raven

brings bread at his companion's prayer, are supremely fine. Strange to say, in this last picture, this most modern of painters returns to primitive fashions, and in the background depicts several other scenes in the lives of the parties. The general tone is a remarkably cool silvery gray, which some would call cold; and the painting is rapid and impressionistic. The paint is put on remarkably thin, barely covering the canvas. Velasquez always painted thinly, and usually upon a light ground, which in his later pictures became white. It is to this light ground that we are indebted for much of the freshness of his works, which have scarcely darkened after two hundred and fifty years.

Velasquez's coveted office was the cause of his death. At last the long war with France, that had resulted in the downfall of Spain's greatness, was brought to an end. Under the guidance of Mazarin, the youthful Louis XIV had asked for the hand of Philip's daughter, the Infanta Maria Teresa, with a view to claiming the throne of Spain on Philip's death; and it was arranged that the marriage should take place on the Isle of Pheasants in the River Bidassoa that divides the two countries. A magnificent pavilion was to be provided for the purpose, decorated with pictures and tapestries from the royal palace at Madrid. The whole court was to be transported to the frontier; a work of almost superhuman difficulty considering the desolation and poverty of the intervening region. Four hundred pack mules were required to transport the baggage. Provision had to be made for feeding and lodging the moving host. It was infinitely more difficult than the handling of an army. Soldiers can help themselves and expect hardships; but here was a vast horde of ladies and courtiers accustomed only to luxury, and whose comfort and caprices must be considered. The size of this caravan may be imagined from the fact that Don Luis de Haro alone had more than two hundred followers. The head of the enor-

mous procession had already reached Alcalà when the tail quitted Madrid. Along the route there were no suitable inns, and shelter had to be provided at the twenty-four stopping places, as well as bull-fights and festivities of all kinds. At Alcalà the court enjoyed a novel sport — a nocturnal bull-fight, lit up by the tar and resin burning upon the backs and horns of the wretched beasts. We may be sure that Velasquez had no part in the preparation of this brutal festival. He had no taste for cruelty, and felt none of the Spaniard's joy in the infliction of pain. The court set out on April 15, 1660, and reached San Sebastian on May 11. Here it remained three weeks, and for each day some splendid festival had to be arranged.

All went well. The marriage took place on June 7 with becoming splendor. Louis was horrified at the bride's absurd costume, with its balloon skirts, but pleased with her person. He always found her wearisome, but when she died he declared that her death was the only sorrow that she had ever caused him. The kind-hearted Philip wept bitterly at parting with his daughter. The day after the wedding, the procession started on its return, reaching Madrid on June 26th. Velasquez had managed everything with admirable discretion, but his almost superhuman exertions were too much for a man already past sixty. He must have been ill on the journey, for the report spread that he was dead, and his family were astonished when he returned alive. In a letter written on July 3, 1660, a week after his return, he says that he is "tired with traveling by night and working by day, but in good health." But it was not long to last. On July 31 he was stricken with a fever, accompanied by great weakness and frequent fainting spells. The King sent him his own physicians, who no doubt hastened the master's death by bleeding him in the atrocious fashion of the time, and so draining away the little strength that was left. He sent, too, the Arch-

bishop of Tyre, who preached to the dying man a sermon of an hour's duration. It is not surprising that on the 6th of August he passed away.

He was buried next day with great honor, clothed in the garb of a knight of Santiago, with the red cross upon his breast, and with hat, boots, sword and spurs. His grave was in the Parish Church of Saint John the Baptist. Unhappily his remains were lost on the domolition of this church in the first half of the last century. Seven days after his death his wife suddenly died, probably of a broken heart at the loss of so noble a gentleman,— a knight without fear and without reproach, if ever one there was. There is a portrait in the Prado that is called *Juana Pacheco;* but there is no reason to believe that it is she; and we know not the features of the faithful wife of a husband who, as far as history records, was faithful to her in an age of license. It seems more likely that she appears in the splendid portrait at Berlin, on whose back the words "Juana de Miranda" appear in ancient letters. This, however, is considered by Señor Beruete a work of Mazo's or of some other imitator of the master.

About the same time the King wrote with a trembling hand on the margin of a decree touching Velasquez's accounts, "Quedo adbatido," "I am overcome"; and he appointed Del Mazo, the master's son-in-law, to succeed him as court painter.

It is strange how quickly and completely the master was forgotten. His severe art did not please the men who came after him, and his pictures had few admirers. Only about the middle of the nineteenth century, when Manet founded the school of the Impressionists, was he rediscovered, and since then his fame has continually grown until for some it has almost blotted out the recollection of every other master of the brush.

Of all the great masters he was the least productive.

He seems to have painted hardly a hundred pictures, some of which have disappeared. In a life scarcely longer, Rembrandt produced some six hundred, and others were almost as diligent. Perhaps, like most Spaniards, he lacked industry. Perhaps the multifold distractions of the court consumed his time.

There are comparatively few who will concur in Thoré's judgment that he was "Le peintre le plus peintre qui fût jamais"; but there are still fewer who will now deny him a place among the great masters of the brush. The writer confesses that when he first entered the Prado he was more struck by the brilliant technique of Goya; but as he returned day after day to study the pictures, the absolute sincerity and truth of Velasquez and his quiet mastery grew upon him until at length he realized that Velasquez was a great master and Goya only a wonderful prestidigitateur of the brush. In his genius Velasquez is closely akin to Thackeray. There is the same preference for unlovely types, the same aloofness, the same coldly scientific analysis of character and of the problems of art. But within his somewhat narrow sphere the master is supreme.

Rembrandt

From a portrait by himself

REMBRANDT

1606–1669

I

EARLY YEARS

THE greatest of all Dutch painters, the magician who rules over that enchanted realm where light and darkness are forever contending for the mastery and light is forever triumphant, could justly boast that he was a citizen of no mean city. His native town of Leyden had a glorious history. It was among the first cities of the North in the development of the arts. The foremost of its early masters, Lucas van Leyden, was one of the greatest painters in one of the world's greatest eras of artistic endeavor, and he lived like a prince from the product of his brush. But the exploit which has given the city its most assured claim to immortality is its more than heroic defense when besieged by the Spaniards in 1573–4, and when it beat back the invincible armies and humbled the pride of Spain; while the example which her citizens gave of courage against overwhelming odds and of fortitude under the most frightful sufferings was an inspiration to the Protestant cause throughout the whole of Europe.

It is generally believed that Rembrandt was born on July 15, 1606, though some contend for 1607 and others for 1608. It was a fortunate period in the history of the city. It had had time to recover from the effects of the siege. Prosperity had returned. Trade and manufacturers were active. The perils through which they had passed had united the hearts of the citizens. The success of their

wonderful defense had exalted their spirits and had given them confidence in themselves and in one another.

When at the conclusion of the siege, William the Silent had offered the city an exemption from taxes until it should have an opportunity to recuperate, it had nobly prayed that it be given a university instead. And so the University of Leyden had been established, with an endowment liberal for the times. Its success was immediate. The freedom of thought that was granted drew to it many of the greatest thinkers of the age. Its halls were thronged with eager scholars. Owing to its influence, Holland was the first of European countries to realize that witchcraft was a delusion, and to repeal the laws that had consigned so many poor wretches to the flames. It was likewise owing to the influence of the University that Holland was the first country to rescind the laws which made it a crime to be a Jew. In consequence of these and other manifestations of a liberal and just spirit, the Dutch bounded forward and took a foremost place among the nations. The University brought with it, as great educational institutions always do, a love for science, literature and philosophy. It leavened the whole mass of the population; while Elzevir's famous press, turning out many of the most beautiful books ever printed, carried the means of learning into every home. It was a good time and a good place to be born.

By birth, Rembrandt was one of the people. He was the fifth child of Harmen Gerritsz, who was half owner of a windmill on the Pelican Quay near the White Gate, where malt was ground for the making of beer. He was a worthy man, esteemed by his neighbors, who chose him twice as head of their ward. In addition to his interest in the mill, he owned his own home — no doubt humble enough — on the edge of the town beside the ramparts, several other houses and gardens, and also a burial place

in St. Peter's Church near the pulpit. His position was modest, but honorable and independent. A face that continually reappears in Rembrandt's early work has been generally accepted as his likeness. If so, he had a strong, homely Dutch countenance, not unlike that of his illustrious son in later days. The expression is kindly and intelligent. It is the face of a shrewd, practical miller, who will provide well for his family and do his duty in his unpretentious sphere. No doubt because of his residence beside one of the arms of the great river, he added to his name the words "van Ryn," or "van Rijn," "of the Rhine," and this his illustrious son retained. The home of Harmen has long since passed away. It was No. 3 Weddesteeg. Even the street has ceased to exist, and where it once ran there now stands the Naval School.

From the number of portraits of her that he has left, and the fact that he named all three of his daughters for her, we know that Rembrandt's mother must have been very dear to him. Her name was Neeltge Willemsdochter. Neeltge is Dutch for Cornelia. She was the daughter of a baker. She must have been very religious, for Rembrandt represents her almost always with the Bible in her hand or lying close beside her. She was, like her fellow-townsmen generally, a Calvinist, and in all probability the Bible was her only book. Her features were the homely features of the middle and lower classes of her people; but she also possessed their sterling virtues. At her knees Rembrandt acquired that knowledge of the Scriptures, which he was afterward to illustrate so fully in the homely Dutch fashion, and with so poignant a realization of its central tragedy.

Of Rembrandt's childhood we know nothing. Reared up close beside the ramparts, he no doubt wandered much in the country, imbibing in these early days that love of nature that was to bear such precious fruit in the years

to come. When of sufficient age he was entered in the Latin class at the University; but he had no taste for books, either at that time or later on. He was a poor scholar, and at the age of fifteen his parents realized that his vocation for art was irresistible. Leyden, rich in philosophy and learning, was poor in art. So the boy was confided to Jacob van Schwanenburch, an aristocrat and a gentleman, who was much esteemed by his fellow citizens, though worse than indifferent as a painter. Yet for one of Rembrandt's originality he was perhaps the best of teachers. He could show the boy how to mix paint and to apply it to canvas. All else the pupil could do unaided. An abler master might have prevented Rembrandt in some measure from taking that intensely personal view of nature that lifts him to a foremost place among the greatest masters. He was apprenticed to Schwanenburch in 1620 or 1621, and remained with him the usual period of three years.

Before the end of his apprenticeship he must have realized the incapacity of his master, and he resolved to seek further instruction in Amsterdam. Peter Lastman was then in high renown at the metropolis. He had studied in Italy, and he painted in the Italian style. He had lost Dutch sincerity and love of truth without acquiring the grace and beauty of the South. The youth soon perceived the worthlessness of Lastman's teaching, the artificiality of his style, and in six months he was back in Leyden, determined to take Nature alone as his master, and to work out his own salvation in his own way.

There was no art school at Leyden, and no hired models were to be had. If there had been models to hire the boy would have had no funds to procure their services. So he took his family for models, and above all his own face; beginning that series of portraits of himself which is without example in the history of art. Having no other op-

portunity to study the expression of the emotions or the splendor of costume among his sober, self-contained people clothed in their somber habiliments, he drew himself with every expression that he could make his face assume and in all the fine raiment and armor that he could lay hands upon. Often it is apparent that the emotion is only feigned, as was inevitable under such circumstances; but still he acquired in this way an extraordinary proficiency in the expression of the passions. Houbraken says of him that "he never left his work in his father's house as long as daylight lasted"; and his studies of artificial light show that he carried his labors far into the night.

His first pictures are dated 1627, when he was twenty-one years of age. They are *St. Paul in Prison* at Stuttgart and the *Money Changer* at Berlin. As might be expected, they are mediocre works; but they already reveal that preoccupation with problems of light and shade that was to result in his greatest triumphs.

It was not until 1629 that he painted a really fine picture — the portrait supposed to be of himself at The Hague. He was then twenty-three. It is a charming face of a beardless young man, sensitive, intelligent, the face of an artist. If it be really the painter himself, his rather rugged, plebeian features have been considerably softened.

Already in 1628 he had begun that wonderful series of etchings, which have given him the first place among the masters of the burin, excelling all others in precision and delicacy of line, in the sense of light and shade and in the expression of values. His first subjects were his own face and the face of his beloved mother. Being a model always at his command and costing nothing, it was his own countenance that he most frequently reproduced. Before he was twenty-five he had already etched his own likeness more than twenty times, with a great variety of expressions and of head-dresses, sometimes as a grandee, some-

times as a soldier, sometimes in Oriental garb, in anger, in terror, in supplication, in every emotion that he could conjure up. He etched everything that came to hand. The long wars had left many cripples and beggars, and these were favorite subjects. He preferred characters of an humble type, the lame, the blind, the necessitous, the peasant, and he presents them with all their infirmities, but with sympathy and kindness. Some of these early etchings reveal scenes of a vulgarity that only his plebeian origin can explain, and which remind one of the unseemly jokes to which the great sad soul of Lincoln would at times descend.

There were good opportunities in Leyden for studying the technique of this part of his craft. Lucas van Leyden had been a great engraver, and his works were no doubt still to be found in his native city. The Elzevirs had to maintain engravers for the illustration of their books. None of these were great masters, but they could teach the technical methods, and that was all that a youth of Rembrandt's genius required. Show him the mechanical trick, and he would infuse into it life and soul and emotional power.

At this time Rembrandt was much encouraged in his work by the companionship of a youth of his own age named Lievens, who was to become an artist of some distinction, and who in these early days was perhaps superior in technical skill to the man of genius. Of the two young men Huygens writes:

"One of these two youths is the son of a mere artisan, an embroiderer of hangings; the other is the son of a miller, but made of other flour than his father. Such parentage makes their intelligence and talent seem indeed prodigious. Their masters were obscure and mediocre artists, for the modest means of their parents could afford them no better instruction. They have become what they are by sheer force of genius, and

I am persuaded that had they been left entirely to themselves, they would have attained the same excellence to which their masters are now mistakably supposed to have contributed. The elder of these two young men, the son of the embroiderer, is called Lievens; the miller's son, Rembrandt. Both are beardless, and judging from their youthful faces and figures, are rather boys than men. Rembrandt is Lievens' superior in intelligence and observation; while Lievens surpasses his companion in nobility of treatment and grandeur of form. Dwelling perpetually, in his youthful ardor, on the sublime and magnificent, he is not content with actual dimensions, and attempts the colossal. Rembrandt, on the contrary, by pure force of talent, achieves a concentration in the more restricted field he chooses, such as we shall seek in vain in his confrere's grandiose compositions. I need cite nothing further in proof of my statement than his picture of *Judas Returning the Price of the Betrayal to the High Priest.* The central figure of Judas, beside himself, bewailing his crime, imploring the pardon he dares not hope for, his face a vision of horror, his hair in wild disorder, his clothes rent, his arms contorted, his hands pressed fiercely together; prostrate on his knees, his whole body seems ravaged and convulsed by his hideous despair."

Thus early had Rembrandt attained his mastery of emotional expression. Fortunately M. Michel has discovered this picture in the collection of M. Haro.

Rembrandt, who was to be so passionate a collector of far-sought and artistic things as to wreck his fortunes in their acquisition, began early the purchase of Oriental fabrics. In these he would dress his father, his mother, his sister or himself, and would paint or etch the subject as an Oriental magnate. It is needless to say that there was slight harmony between the homely Dutch features and the exotic raiment; but it gave the young man an opportunity to study draperies and the splendor of color that his soul yearned for in his somber land.

The first pupil that came to Rembrandt was, strange to

say, Gerard Dou, of all contemporaries the one who was perhaps least influenced by the master's style. Every day the divergence between them grew, Rembrandt becoming ever broader in technique and more powerful in conception, Dou more minute in finish, more circumscribed in vision. Still, in these early days when the boy was pupil to the youth, the essential incompatibility of their point of view had not fully developed. Dou came to Rembrandt in 1628, and remained with him until the master's removal to Amsterdam three years later.

On April 27, 1630, Rembrandt's father died. No record is preserved of the young man's feelings at the time; but his nature was so loving and his attachment to those about him so strong that we know that the death of the worthy miller must have brought a profound sorrow.

By 1631, when he was twenty-five years old, Rembrandt had ceased his gropings and had found the road that was to lead him to a glorious immortality. In the *Presentation in the Temple,* now at The Hague, there shines that "light that never was on sea or land"; a light which does not, like the light of nature, merely dispel and annihilate darkness, but which coexists with it, penetrates it, suffuses it, leaving it darkness still, but a darkness filled with a magical illumination. In later days his shadows were to be still more luminous; but here they are filling the vaults of this vast medieval temple with the spell of their mystery, while the sun's rays, splendid but soft, fall upon the central group, lighting up the gorgeous robes of the high priest and his venerable face, turned to heaven in an ecstasy of joy and faith. In this picture is already revealed the supreme power of Rembrandt, the power to transfigure homely things by the light that falls upon them, the luminous gloom that encircles them and the radiance that shines from within.

Here, too, is shown his method of dealing with the

Scriptural story, whose illustration was to be his greatest life-work. He does not idealize it, like the Italians, representing it as a thing of beauty and dignity. He never left Holland, and he knew nothing of the glory of the South, the beauty of Southern women, the grace of Southern men. For him there was no world save his native land, with its homely scenes and still homelier people. He accepted that world, and into its homely language he was content to translate the sacred story; trusting, and trusting wisely, to his ability to transfigure it all by the magic of light and the power of holiness. The Italians had painted the Scriptural scenes beautifully, partly because they were a handsome race and had many beautiful models at their command, partly because their pictures were for the adornment of beautiful churches. Rembrandt painted them in homely fashion because his models were homely and because the pictures were not for the adornment of religious edifices, but to be hung in Calvinistic homes where the glory of this world was looked upon as sinful, and where men in the intensity of their religious faith thought of the Scriptural events as if occurring in their midst. It was not like the pictures which are now painted as if Christ were living in modern days. The painters know that that is not true; and so in their presentation there is something theatrical and insincere. For Rembrandt, however, his own world was the only one that he knew. He was no scholar; he had never traveled. And so, when he translated the Bible history into terms of Dutch art, he was true to nature and to his own conception; and his homely faces are irradiated with the light of faith.

Such is the spirit that rules in the *Holy Family* at Munich, painted during this same year. It is only the household of an honest Dutch carpenter, with his young wife and child, clothed in the humble garb of their class and in their modest surroundings; but with what transfiguring

love do they look on the divine infant! His choice of a subject that must have seemed Romanish to the strict Protestantism of Leyden shows the independence of his spirit even in these early days. It is a large and important work, with figures of almost life size, an astonishing picture for so young a man. It presents no signs of immaturity. The Madonna is almost beautiful in her mother love, while the reverence of Joseph for the divine child is admirably rendered.

These pictures and others like them had established Rembrandt's position; and his etchings, borne upon the wings of the wind, had carried his fame in every direction, so that Amsterdam held out its arms to him.

Then, as now, Amsterdam was the great commercial mart of the country. The victory over Spain had given the Dutch confidence in themselves. Half the world's mercantile marine belonged to them. Their fleets sailed every sea, bringing the tribute of every land. The liberty of conscience that they had accorded attracted to their shores from the surrounding countries where persecution raged the most enterprising and determined spirits. Four hundred Jewish families, mostly from Portugal, had settled in Amsterdam, bringing the secrets of Portuguese trade; living as a race apart in their own quarter, but confined to no Ghetto, and on kindly terms with their neighbors. Their most distinguished Rabbi, the learned and virtuous Menasseh Ben Israel, was to become one of Rembrandt's closest friends.

Sir Thomas Overbury, who visited Amsterdam in 1609, says that it surpassed Seville, Lisbon or any other mart town in Christendom, while Evelyn says in his diary in 1641 that "it is certainly the most busie concourse of mortalls now upon the whole earth, and the most addicted to com'erce." Its merchant princes, proud of their achievements and conscious of their own importance, de-

sired that their portraits should be painted, in order that their walls might be adorned by the features of the master of the house and their likeness transmitted to an admiring posterity. A thoroughly domestic people, loving their own hearths with passionate fervor, they wished also the portraits of their wives and children. So, the opportunities of the portrait painter were immense, and painting became the one really vital art of the Dutch people.

For some time before his removal to Amsterdam in 1631, the Metropolis had been calling to Rembrandt. His fame as a portrait painter had reached the great city, and he had made many trips thither to limn its worthy burghers. Everything conspired to draw the young man thither. Leyden, like most university towns, was not an art center. Learning and philosophy, the dead past and the realm of ideas, ruled the scene, and the eminent jurists and scholars that adorned the university cared little for the pictorial presentation of the every day world about them; nor did they have the means suitably to reward the artist. At Amsterdam, on the other hand, wealth was overflowing, and its princely merchants lived in the present. Possessed of handsome homes adorned with far-sought riches brought from Java and Cathay, they wished them ornamented by suitable paintings. The more cultivated of them, who had traveled in Italy, preferred the Italian style, and either bought pictures by the masters beyond the Alps or favored those of the Dutch painters who had studied in the South. Many of them, however, remained thoroughly Dutch, and preferred the homely scenes of their own land and an art, like Rembrandt's, that was true to the soil whence it sprang.

At Amsterdam, too, the artists were gathered, as they are now gathered in London, Paris or New York; and here the young man could find a congenial art atmosphere, where the problems with which he was confronted would be in-

telligently discussed. It is true that Rembrandt, so original and self-centered, was little in need of external inspiration and little susceptible to external impressions; yet even he must have preferred the society of artists to that of the jurists and theologians who ruled in Leyden; while the rich fabrics, the splendid armor and jewels and the many curiosities brought from distant lands delighted his artistic vision. So, at some time in 1631, when twenty-five years of age, Rembrandt removed to Amsterdam. It must have been hard to leave the widowed mother whom he loved so much and the brothers and sister who had been his childhood's playmates; but the call of art, as usual, was not to be resisted.

II

GOLDEN DAYS

On Rembrandt's previous trips to Amsterdam he had probably got acquainted with Hendrick van Uylenborch, the dealer in pictures and curios. At any rate, when he reached the city he took up his abode with Hendrick, and with that improvidence which was to prove his ruin, he proceeded forthwith on June 30, 1631, to lend his host a thousand florins — probably his little all — without security, a loan that was never to be repaid. The young artist needed, however, a commodious studio, so he soon found a home on the Bloemgracht.

His services were in immediate demand. In 1632 he painted ten portraits that have come down to us, and during the four succeeding years he painted a hundred and two. These, in addition to his numerous etchings and pictorial compositions, make a total achievement that reveals the most tireless industry, and shows that the de-

mand for his services was as great as human capacity could satisfy. He was the fashionable portrait painter of the day, and every worthy burgher desired that he and his faithful *vrouw* should be immortalized by Rembrandt's brush. His studio was thronged with the *élite* of the city, and, as Houbraken said, men had not only to pay, but to pray, to get their portraits painted. Now he had to restrain his exuberance. In the portraits of himself and family that he had made at Leyden he had used the subjects rather as a study in color, light and draperies, clothing them fantastically in rich vestments. Here he had to depict the proud burghers exactly as they were, in their plain and Puritanical garb; and for some years he was able to curb his genius to the gait demanded by his patrons.

He not only painted the faces of his sitters, he revealed their inmost nature. He perceived that only the eyes and the mouth tell the story of the soul. Other features nature constructs; but from the windows of the eyes the soul looks out, and about the mouth there gather the lines that character has etched. These Rembrandt studied, and with their aid he lets us into the man's secret heart. He is above all the painter of the eyes. Such tell-tale eyes no one else has ever painted. In their depths the soul of the man is written.

With all his supreme genius he rarely had any sense of the beauty of form. Truth transfigured by light was all in all for him. This singular blindness to beauty of form is revealed in many etchings that he made shortly after settling in Amsterdam. He gives us a number of nudes which are perhaps the most repulsive in the realm of art, *Diana Bathing, Potiphar's Wife* and the like, for which he has found a model in some misshapen kitchen wench whose plebeian ugliness he has transferred to the plate without the slightest attempt at idealization.

The year after his removal to Amsterdam he painted a great masterpiece that constitutes a mile-stone on his career — the *Anatomy Lesson* at The Hague.

It was by no means the first picture of its kind. Since the day in 1555 when Philip II had reluctantly consented to the dissection of the human body, the study of anatomy had been pursued in Holland with the greatest ardor. In the principal cities "Theaters of Anatomy" were erected, a table in the center for the cadaver, with benches rising in tiers around it. Beside the body stood the demonstrator. Upon the lower seats sat the doctors and students, while the higher were filled with spectators drawn by the same morbid curiosity that brought such crowds to the Parisian Morgue until it was closed to the public. These scenes were too peculiar to escape the Dutch painters. They had represented them with all the repulsiveness of disemboweled and decaying bodies, while the persons look straight out of the canvas, sitting for their portraits and taking no interest in the work in hand.

When the great doctor whom we know as Tulp on account of the tulip sculptured on the front of his house ordered of his young friend a picture to be hung in the Surgeons' Hall, he no doubt expected something of the kind. But Rembrandt was determined to produce a work worthy of such a man — a man of vast learning, of infinite charity, four times burgomaster of his city, who lived up to the noble maxim inscribed on one of his portraits — *aliis inserviendo consumor*. In his picture the "Theater of Anatomy" with its crowd of idle spectators vanishes. We have the corpse upon the table, rigid in death, its marble whiteness lighting up the center of the composition. At its farther side stands Tulp, with his handsome, earnest and thoughtful face. Only the left hand and forearm of the corpse have been dissected, so that no horrors are depicted. Around the body are gathered the seven directors

of the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons, men with faces as intelligent and as serious as Tulp's, all deeply interested in his explanation, and with eyes fixed upon the dissected arm, save two, who are looking out of the picture, as if their attention had been for a moment distracted by the entrance of another. Rembrandt was to do greater things in the days to come; but it is a noble masterpiece, despite the defective foreshortening of the corpse, and once seen, it will never be forgotten. It at once placed the young artist, then but twenty-six, in a position above all rivals, and proclaimed him the foremost painter of Holland.

It was a fortunate moment in the history of the country, and the ideal time for Rembrandt to appear upon the scene. The war with Spain was dragging on, but Holland was victorious, and her fleets were on every sea. William the Silent was dead, and his son Maurice, too, was gone; but the position of Stadholder was held by another son, Frederick Henry, an enlightened patron of the arts. Like most of his cultivated countrymen, he preferred Rubens, Van Dyck and the Italians to the native school; but he was too wise a ruler to neglect so important a branch of his country's activity. The *Anatomy Lesson* forced Rembrandt upon his attention, and by his command the master painted for him five large compositions; the *Raising* and the *Descent from the Cross,* the *Entombment,* the *Resurrection* and the *Ascension,* all now at Munich. Space permits us only to speak of the first and second of these. They are the most important, though all possess conspicuous merits.

Rembrandt had never traveled even as far as Antwerp. Indeed, the brief journey from Leyden to Amsterdam, with a rare excursion to a neighboring city, comprised all his wanderings. He had never seen Rubens' great masterpieces; but he must have been familiar with them from the

engravings that were scattered through the world. His version of the *Descent from the Cross* is far less harmonious, far less beautiful. The dead Christ is a lifeless cadaver without beauty of proportion; but the grief of the disciples is poignant, and the men who lower the body do so awkwardly yet reverently. But the great contrast with Rubens' masterpiece is in the attitude of the rich man who had offered the stone-cut sepulcher. In Rubens' picture he assists reverently to lower the sacred form. In Rembrandt's he stands idly by, his feet far apart, utterly unmoved, in all the pride of his wealth, looking on imperiously while the labor that he has commanded is being done. Probably Rembrandt's presentation of the sympathy of the poor for the grief that is always close to them and the indifference of the rich is nearer the truth of nature. At any rate, we see that it is as hard for such a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven as it is for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle.

In the *Raising of the Cross* Rembrandt is worthy to be compared to Rubens. He has adopted the same conception. The cross, dragged heavily upward, cuts the picture diagonally in the same manner. There is the same sense of straining, though not carried so far. But in this picture Rembrandt surpasses himself in the handling of the human form. The naked Christ is one of the most beautiful figures in painting, perfect in its proportions as a Greek god, and rendered with consummate skill. The face, full of faith and anguish, ready for the great atonement and yet overcome by the intolerable pain, is superb and very handsome. Face and form alike seem borrowed from some alien race of greater beauty and to have nothing in common with the homely Dutch types that the master ordinarily depicts.

The *Anatomy Lesson* brought Rembrandt so many commissions for portraits that for the next few years he had

little time for anything save to reproduce the features of his sitters and to paint the pictures ordered by the Stadholder. These portraits are so masterly that each is deserving of separate study; but his activity was so great that only the most notable can be mentioned in a sketch like this.

Still in this year, 1632, he found time to paint the two very similar pictures, each called *The Philosopher,* in the Louvre, representing an aged man sitting at his desk in an attitude of profound and somber meditation, while the light of the dying day falls upon him through the window and fills the strange room with the luminous shadows that the painter loved.

His masterpiece in portraiture for the year 1633 was perhaps the *Shipbuilder and his Wife,* of Buckingham Palace. The aged shipbuilder is seated at a table drawing the hull of a vessel, and looks up as his wife approaches and hands him a letter. They are old, toil-worn and homely; but in every line we read their perfect trust in one another, the mutual love that has supported them in every trial, and bound them closer together with the travail of the years; and the light within makes their homely old faces things of beauty. But even as we proclaim this his masterpiece of that year, we think of the portraits of Jan Pellicorne and his wife in the Wallace Collection, and we hesitate to give even the *Shipbuilder* the preference over these marvels of exquisite and perfect painting, where the figures are so alive, so well realized, so enveloped in atmosphere.

It was in the happy year of 1632 that Rembrandt first met her who was for a short time to make his life so happy — Saskia van Uylenborch. She was a cousin of Hendrick of that name, the friend to whom Rembrandt had lent the thousand florins the year before; and although the artist was never to get his money, he was compensated

many times over by the introduction to the young girl who was to be his wife. It was no doubt at Hendrick's house that Rembrandt met her.

Her father, Rombertus, was a distinguished jurist of Leeuwarden, the chief town of Friesland. Of a noble and wealthy family, he had served his city as either *échevin* or burgomaster for thirteen years. Born in 1612, she lost her mother in 1619, and in 1624 her father passed away. She had numerous brothers and sisters, who were established in the world; and with these she lived. The male portion of the family were engaged in bitter litigation over the estate; but this did not disturb the concord between the sisters. No doubt she was beautiful according to Dutch standards; but to us she seems not more than passably good looking. Her round and rather commonplace features, inclining to a double chin, were, however, redeemed by the brilliancy of her complexion, her light blonde hair, the brightness of her small eyes, and the sweetness of her expression.

Among her relatives was a cousin who was married to Jan Cornelis Sylvius, a Protestant minister at Amsterdam, a man of high character, much honored by his fellow citizens. It was while on a visit to his home that she met Rembrandt. In 1632 he painted her portrait. Whether it was a commission or a work of love we do not know; but before the year was out he had painted her twice again, which could only have been at the dictates of the heart. We may therefore agree that if they did not love at first sight, love grew up between them as the picture grew beneath the artist's brush. A note on a drawing in the Berlin Gallery indicates, however, that the formal engagement did not take place until the 8th of June of the following year. There is a portrait of her by Rembrandt painted in that year of 1633, holding in her hand a sprig of rosemary, the

Dutch symbol of betrothal; and this confirms the evidence of the note.

It was an advantageous match for both. A union with a daughter of a noble house would raise the social position of the miller's son, and the substantial inheritance that she had received from her father would be a help to a young artist; while, on the other hand, Rembrandt was then in such high favor and earning such large sums that he was a most desirable suitor. Though not handsome, with strongly marked and somewhat plebeian features, his appearance was attractive, and at this period of his life he was careful and even sumptuous in his dress.

The course of their true love ran smoothly enough; but with a slowness that must have been exasperating to one of Rembrandt's ardent temperament. Though no one opposed the wedding, for some unexplained reason it was deemed best to defer it until after the bride should be of age. In the autumn of 1633 Saskia was called away to Franeker, where her aunt Antje died on November 9. This further delayed the marriage. She returned to Amsterdam in the spring of 1634, and Rembrandt painted her crowned with flowers in a picture at St. Petersburg, strangely miscalled *The Jewish Bride,* no doubt on account of the rich robe that he had cast about her. More properly it is called *Flora.* It was not until June 10, 1634, that the contract was signed, Rembrandt obligating himself to procure his mother's sanction and Sylvius agreeing to give his formal assent before the third publication of the bans. All went well, and on the 22nd of June, 1634, the wedding took place in the town hall of Bildt in the presence of Saskia's aunt and uncle, the Van Loos, the religious ceremony following at the parish church, performed by the minister, Rodolph Hermansz Luinga. It was probably in the year of their marriage that Rembrandt painted the Saskia at Cas-

sel, his most perfect portrait of her and one of the greatest marvels of the brush in its rich color, exquisite finish and complete realization.

Rarely has there been a happier marriage. Rembrandt was but twenty-six, yet already the foremost artist in a land that was teeming with artists. His life had been sober, abstemious and industrious. Houbraken says that when at work he was content with a dried herring or a lump of cheese. Pleasure, save the innocent joys of his home life, he had hardly known, and the union with the woman he loved opened up to him a new realm of happiness of which he had scarcely dreamed. She on her part was a fresh young girl of twenty-two, bright, gentle and very loving, who adored her husband, in whose eyes she was surpassingly beautiful. We know exactly how she looked, for Rembrandt was never content save in depicting her lineaments; and with her amiable disposition she never wearied of posing as his model, sometimes in formal portraits, sometimes as characters in sacred or profane history. We even know how she appeared undraped; for there can be little doubt that she was the model for the *Danäe* of the Hermitage. Her form is not surpassingly beautiful, but it is delicate and fair to look upon, very different from the kitchen wenches with whom Rembrandt had been compelled formerly to content himself in Puritan Holland. The artist, while he wished to record and preserve his wife's beauty, at least had the modesty not to sell the picture, which remained in his possession until his effects were seized in bankruptcy.

The happiness of the young couple was unalloyed. Simple in their tastes, they lived for one another. The picture at Dresden of Saskia seated on Rembrandt's knee while he holds in his hand a long wineglass from which he has been drinking to the point of exhilaration has given many the idea that Rembrandt was a wassailer. Nothing could

be further from the fact. He was abstemious and content with innocent pleasures. He was no more a wine-bibber than he was a soldier, an Oriental monarch, a lord of high degree addicted to hawking, or any of the other characters in which he used to pose before the mirror as he painted his own portrait. The young couple lived much to themselves, content with one another's society, she sitting by his side as he worked at the easel or serving him as model if he so desired. Their short married life seems to have been one long honeymoon. She has been blamed for not restraining his natural prodigality, but the reproach is hardly just. He was hopelessly extravagant in the purchase of jewels, of Oriental fabrics, of brocaded silks and works of art; but he no doubt persuaded her that they were an admirable investment, which could be disposed of at an enhanced price. Nor was there any visible occasion to economize. Rembrandt was the most popular painter of one of the richest cities in Europe. Everyone was clamoring for a portrait by his hand. He was receiving from 500 to 600 florins for a portrait, and had more orders than he could fill. Money was rolling in at a rate that exceeded all their requirements; and there was no indication that the golden rain would cease. Rembrandt afterwards declared, and the court found it to be true, that at the time of Saskia's death they were worth 40,750 florins; which proves that there was no wasting of their substance. Of his circumstances at this time Sandrart says: "His house at Amsterdam was filled by numerous pupils from good families, each of whom paid him annually as much as 100 florins, without reckoning the money brought in by their paintings and engravings, which, apart from his personal earnings, may be estimated at some 2,000 or 2,500 florins."

Moreover, there is nothing to show that Saskia ever spent a florin unnecessarily, or that she could control her husband's expenditures. In money matters Rembrandt was

always a child. Whatever he wanted he had to have, and he never stopped to count the cost. If he went to an auction sale, as he often did, he would not gradually advance the price to meet the offers of other bidders, but would at once bid what he thought the object was worth; and if it struck his fancy, that price was apt to be beyond the most sanguine hopes of the seller. He loved not only pictures and expensive embroidered silks from the Orient, but jewels; and the pearls that he purchased were magnificent. He used them to adorn his beloved wife, and she wore them gratefully; but there is nothing to indicate that he bought them at her suggestion, or that she would not have been just as happy without them. In fact, no stain rests on Saskia's memory. She seems to have been a sweet, gentle and loving wife, who made her husband supremely happy during the few years that she dwelt by his side; years which were rich in splendid works whose number and excellence prove that Rembrandt was spending his days in labor, and that he found in his home the peace and joy that strengthened him for his work. It must be remembered, too, that she was an heiress, and brought him a considerable estate.

In December, 1635, Saskia bore Rembrandt a son, who was christened Rombertus after her father. Rembrandt was delighted with the little fellow, and made many sketches of him and his mother, characterized by his usual realism. To us it is only a funny little Dutch baby; but we may be sure that it was very dear to the parents, both of whom were by nature singularly loving. Unhappily, Death, who was to pursue Rembrandt so relentlessly until the end, overtook the infant in a few months.

Before his marriage Rembrandt had moved from the Bloemgracht to St. Antonies Breestraat close to the Nieuwe Markt. In 1636 he moved to the Nieuwe Doelstraat, no doubt to a larger and handsomer apartment, which he filled

with works of art, elegant furniture and hangings and all sorts of curios. Here he and Saskia lived a joyous life, the center of a circle of admiring friends. Besides the jeweler Jan Lutman and the vain but excellent writing-master Coppenol, there were in the circle several ministers of the Gospel, art dealers and physicians, besides a number of painters. These were almost all painters of landscape. The choice is significant. In portraiture Rembrandt justly felt that none of his contemporaries could instruct him. In landscape, however, in which he was afterwards to do such splendid work, he had as yet done scarcely anything; and it was natural that he should seek those who practised that branch of the art. Their talk was not shop to him. A little later, certainly by 1641, their circle was joined by Jan Six, a man of great virtues and accomplishments, afterwards burgomaster of the city.

We read of only one unpleasant event in these early married years. Saskia's brothers, jealous of the sumptuous mode of life led by their sister and her husband, charged her with dissipating her inheritance in dress and ostentation. Rembrandt, rushing to the defense of her he loved so much, brought suit against them for slander, alleging that he and his wife were "amply, even superabundantly provided for." The proceeding dragged along until 1638, when the court held that the words were not actionable, and dismissed the suit without an investigation of the facts.

In that year we find him established in another house called the Snijkerbackerij on the Binnen Amstel, where on July 1 a second child was born, a daughter, who on July 22 was christened at the Oude Kerk by the name of Cornelia, in memory of Rembrandt's mother. Like almost everything the master loved, she was short lived, and in a month she had passed away.

On January 5, 1639, Rembrandt purchased a house in the

Joden Breestraat, now No. 68. For this he agreed to pay thirteen thousand florins. He paid one-half the sum shortly afterward, and by May he had taken possession. It was the first home of his own that he had ever had, and we may be sure that the devoted young couple were both proud and happy in their new dignity as householders. It was in the very heart of the Jewish quarter, so that the master easily found those Hebrew models which he loved to use in illustrating the Bible story. Unhappily, with his usual thriftlessness, instead of paying the balance due on the house he spent his money in adding to his collections or in entertaining his friends.

On July 29, 1640, Saskia bore him another daughter, and to her he also gave his mother's name of Cornelia; but this child also died within a month. Only their deep mutual love could have sustained Rembrandt and his wife under such repeated blows. That he was profoundly saddened is revealed in the cast of many of his works of this time.

In September or October of 1640 a still greater sorrow came to afflict Rembrandt. The mother whom he had loved so devotedly passed away. It was indeed a hard blow to him. There was never a more affectionate son. The various portraits of his mother that he painted after his removal to Amsterdam prove that either he made numerous trips to Leyden to see her, or else she was a frequent visitor in his city home.

Of these portraits the most striking is the one at Vienna, showing her in extreme old age, her face like wrinkled parchment, her teeth gone, so that the cheeks sink in, yet the eyes still alert and kindly. One can see that the picture was painted with infinite love, and that every line in that withered countenance was dear to him who held the brush.

After his mother's death Rembrandt's share of his father's estate was 2,490 florins, with 1,600 florins still to be divided. For his share Rembrandt took a mortgage on the mill, giving his brother a long time to pay it out. He at once sold the mortgage, and for this he has been blamed as inconsistent with his generosity in granting the long indulgence. It is hard to see the justice of this. The assignee of the mortgage could not shorten the time granted, and while Rembrandt got the money he wanted, no doubt at a considerable discount, his brother still enjoyed the delay in payment that he had craved.

The ten years from 1632 to 1642 were Rembrandt's golden years. Sorrows indeed came to him, and also joys in overflowing measure. This was the period of his brief popularity. He was now painting pictures that his countrymen could understand and appreciate. He was not yet the mystic poet who dwelt in a magic realm of luminous shadows. Light and shade were there, but they were subordinate to form. He painted like other Dutchmen, only better, with a richer fusing of colors, a mellower touch, greater skill in the presentation of form, a more delightful illumination, and, above all, a deeper insight into character. The work of his later days, when he had become a poet and a dreamer, when light had grown to be the object of his idolatry, and its eternal battle with darkness the theme of all his efforts, when he had taught darkness and light to dwell together in a way unknown to this work-a-day world, but which is infinitely precious — these later works appeal to us now with a more compelling charm. But with his hard-headed, practical Dutch contemporaries, who wished no nonsense, but wanted to see their own lineaments and those of their families protrayed exactly as they were, these earlier works were precisely the thing desired. We cannot blame them for delighting in such marvels of the painter's

art — portraits which are among the greatest that have ever been made,— though we may regret their inability to follow his genius in its later flights.

He also etched a great many portraits, and these are the best of the kind that were ever made. In those days, when there were no photographs, anyone who wished to multiply his likeness for his friends and relatives had recourse to the etcher or engraver. The portraits which Rembrandt etched surpass all others in delicacy and precision of line and particularly in the revelation of character.

It is not surprising that his studio was thronged with pupils. Many of the greatest names in Dutch art are found among them — Govert Flink, Ferdinand Bol, Geerbrandt van den Eeckhout, Jan Victors, Philips de Koninck, Leendeert Cornelisz and others. By the custom of the time the work of the pupils belonged to the master, and he was entitled to send it out into the world under his own signature, if he saw fit. Rembrandt's art, however, was so purely personal that his scholars could lend him little assistance. Some of the replicas of his pictures may bear traces of their brushwork, but the originals seem to have been by the master's hand alone. Even in his etchings, owing to his practice of drawing directly on the plate, they could give him little help.

Rembrandt adopted a peculiar system in dealing with his pupils. His studio was divided by partitions, so that each disciple worked alone. He thus sought both to secure concentration on their task and originality of presentation. He had learned the necessity of this from experience. He threw his whole soul into his work, and undisturbed solitude was an indispensable condition of his success.

In the meantime, though overwhelmed with orders for portraits, Rembrandt found time for other creations. The year 1634 was perhaps the busiest of his life. Yet he managed to indulge his fortunate mania for painting

himself. No less than seven portraits of himself painted in that year have come down to us, besides several of Saskia. His own features are so marked that it is not hard to recognize him, even when he takes considerable liberties with the truth; though it is hard to see how anybody can find in the truculent soldier of the Hermitage, miscalled *Sobieski,* any resemblance to the painter, as some have done. When, however, we come to Saskia it is different. There are many pictures that bear a certain resemblance to her, and yet are not accurate likenesses. Perhaps Rembrandt used her only as a study, and varied her features at pleasure. Perhaps they were engraved so deeply in his heart that faces of other models assumed her semblance. At any rate, there are a number of pictures, like the splendid *Jewish Bride* of the Liechtenstein Gallery and the still more splendid *Artemisia* of the Prado, in which some see Saskia's features while others can trace no resemblance. The latter picture is by some called *Cleopatra.* Most likely it was intended for some character in Scripture, as Rembrandt rarely turned to profane history for his subjects.

In his love for realism Rembrandt liked to secure Jews for models of his Biblical pictures, dressing them up in the gorgeous costumes of his studio. Yet he cared nothing for archeological accuracy, and would clothe his characters in any garb that suited his ideas of the picturesque. The centurion who superintends the *Elevation of the Cross* wears a Turkish turban, and in Samson's girdle is a Javanese kris. He sought only for pictorial effect. He delighted in gorgeous fabrics, in splendid armor, in magnificent jewels, and he put them in wherever he thought they would enrich the picture.

It was in 1635 that he painted the *Sacrifice of Isaac* at Munich. The figures are life-sized and admirably rendered. He has, as usual, chosen the moment when at the voice of

the angel Abraham drops the knife that he is about to plunge into his son's throat. But he does something which no one else would have done — Abraham covers Isaac's face with his hand, well knowing that he could not slay his child if he looked into his eyes.

This year also witnessed the most grotesque of all Rembrandt's failures in dealing with the antique — the *Ganymede* at Dresden. The master had no capacity of idealization. He could transfigure the homeliest things, bathing them in marvelous light that converts them into objects of rarest beauty; but he could not give them a form of grace that they did not possess. Nor, indeed, did he ever seek to do so. The actual was good enough for him, and his aim was to prove that the magic of art can transmute the commonest things into gems. And so, his attempts to deal with classical mythology are always failures and almost always ludicrous. But never was he so ill advised as in the painting of this unhappy *Ganymede*. An ugly Dutch boy of about seven years of age has been seized by an eagle, and is being borne aloft by the tail of his shirt, while he bawls in ridiculous terror. A picture more hopelessly vulgar was never conceived. Its execution is of course magnificent; but in conception it is perhaps the lowest point to which a capable artist ever sank. It looks like a coarse joke; but there is no reason to doubt that Rembrandt meant it seriously. We do not mean that he did not see the humor of the situation. No doubt it seemed to him much more humorous than it does to us. The trouble is that he really conceived the event as occurring thus. As he conceived the Scripture story as taking place in the Holland of his time, so he conceived the Grecian myths, and he endeavored to realize what would happen to a scantily clad Dutch boy when carried off by an eagle. In all likelihood he actually hung a boy up by his shirt with his rear to the

spectator, and painted him from the life while he howled.

The reason why his homely treatment of Bible stories is so effective and his like treatment of classic themes so grotesquely unsuccessful is easy to understand. The pathos of sorrow, the beauty of the soul's aspirations are heightened rather than diminished by showing them in homely faces and surroundings. That we should find nobility and delicacy of feeling in such humble countenances adds the force of a surprise, and makes us realize all the more strongly the brotherhood of man and the purity of faith. We realize that in a peasant's hut and beneath his coarse lineaments there may be a heart as noble as ever dwelt in princely bosom. It draws us closer to our fellow beings, while we realize all the more the transfiguring power of goodness. But the ancient myths are inseparably associated with physical beauty. Rob them of that, and they become grotesque.

Fortunately, however, such mistakes are rare, and usually Rembrandt devotes himself to his great mission of revealing the beauty that lies in homely things, the poetry and the pathos that may be written on homely faces. Sometimes he presents us an able but unattractive picture, like the wonderful *Samson Threatening his Father-in-law* at Berlin, one of his most perfect works; but more frequently he gives us an admirable creation like the *Angel Raphael leaving Tobias,* now in the Louvre, where the profound reverence of the elder couple who dare not raise their faces to their celestial visitant, is so happily contrasted with the greater courage of the youthful pair, whose eyes follow their benefactor in his flight. Here, as usual, it is in the ideal portion that the master is weak. The human beings are wholly admirable; but the angel lacks both beauty and grace, and his legs outstretched toward the spectator are those of a homely Dutch youth. His flight, too, has been

studied from that of a large bird that beats its way heavily upward, and has none of the grace of a celestial being sweeping through space on extended pinions.

The angel of *Manoah's Sacrifice* at Dresden is far more grotesque; but Manoah and his wife in their united prayer are amongst the finest and most moving creations of the master's genius.

The year 1642 was the tragic beginning of Rembrandt's long sorrow. Early in that year he finished his great masterpiece the *Night Watch,* which destroyed his popularity, and before the year was out Saskia was dead.

In September, 1641, she bore a son who was called Titus, after Saskia's sister, Titia, who had died three months before. The infant was christened on September 22, 1641, in the Zuider Kerk. It is probable from her etched portraits that Saskia, who had never been strong, was ailing at the time. The birth of three children and the sorrow for their loss had undermined her frail constitution. She does not seem to have rallied after Titus' birth, but lingered on in delicate health until June 5, 1642, when she made her will. The wavering, uncertain signature tells how weak she was. The terms of the testament show a confidence in Rembrandt's business ability which was wholly undeserved. Evidently love blinded her eyes to his incapacity. She left to him her entire estate, to be administered without accountability, expressing the belief that he would know best what should be done for their infant son. The only restriction was that if he should marry again, one-half the estate should be set aside in trust for Titus. Within a fortnight her gentle spirit had passed away, leaving Rembrandt, then only thirty-six, a broken-hearted man with a sickly infant, nine months of age. On June 19, she was buried in the Oude Kerk, and Rembrandt bought the spot where her body lay, that she might rest in

peace forever. How strangely he afterward acted in the matter we shall see later.

III

DEEPENING SHADOWS

We know by the diminishing number of portraits that Rembrandt's popularity had greatly declined before Saskia's death. As he nearly always signed his works and dated them, thus giving us much the fullest record of his progress of any of the great masters unless it be Albert Dürer, we are able to trace the steps of his descent in public favor. The reason is not far to seek. Rembrandt was not a boor, but he was no courtier. Born of the people, he never acquired the engaging manners that ingratiate one with the rich and powerful. By nature he was solitary. He could work only in seclusion; and while at his easel he would not suspend his labors though a monarch should knock. The merchant princes of Amsterdam, accustomed to have the artists in obsequious attendance at their beck and call, were deeply affronted when refused admittance to the master's studio, and carried their commissions to more courteous painters. Nor in his hours of leisure did Rembrandt frequent the houses of the great. He either remained at home with Saskia, or he associated with his chosen friends, few of whom were in a position to lend him help. He did not even join the gatherings of his brother artists, who therefore felt no concern for his success. He said, "When I desire to rest my mind, I seek not honors, but liberty." Liberty he got, the liberty to paint the wonderful visions of fused light and darkness that floated before his mind's eye; but the honors which he sought not went to those who sought them.

Then, too, as we have seen, the luminous shadows in which he continued more and more to envelop his figures puzzled and disconcerted his patrons. Plain, honest Dutchmen, they wanted a matter-of-fact likeness with no nonsense. They wanted to be well painted, but they wanted to look exactly as they looked in daily life when dressed in their best, with no unearthly illumination.

If the master had been content to paint as in his early days, he might have maintained the public favor despite his want of diplomacy and manners. The transparent colors, the admirable realism, the exact resemblance, the profound insight into the sitter's soul which those early portraits display would have sufficed to place him in the highest rank of the world's portrait painters, and were so pleasing to his sitters that they would hardly have abandoned him. But he was not satisfied to remain stationary. Most likely he could not. Genius is a strange thing. It seems an external force, a spirit from without that drives one on, even against one's will. Besides, the human eye is a thing of infinite diversity. Probably no two persons see an object exactly alike. It is quite possible that Rembrandt's eye became so susceptible to effects of light that he saw things as he painted them, shrouded in an effulgent shadow. What seems to us a vision was in all likelihood to him the plain reality. Like Luther, he might have answered his critics, *Ich kann nicht anders.*

When he received the commission to paint the company of the civic guard commanded by Capt. Frans Banning Cocq, and was offered therefor the unexampled price of sixteen hundred florins, he resolved to produce a masterpiece. This he did; and he took one of the great steps upon that road that was to lead him to immortal glory and to the bankrupt court.

Corporation pictures are numerous in Holland. All of its great galleries are filled with them. They are one of

the institutions of the country. They are the natural product of the close union that grew up among the citizens during the long course of the eighty years' war with Spain, when the hearts of men were on continual trial, and they learned to respect and esteem one another. An honest, well-meaning people, devoted to their country and to their homes, experience bound them ever closer together. Mutual confidence led them to act in union, through corporations of all kinds, rather than individually, as in other lands. They were a masculine race. Their women, usually as conspicuous for plainness of features as for piety and household virtues, were the guardians of the domestic hearth, making the home bright and clean and restful for the men, who sought not the society of other women, but spent the time that was not passed by their firesides in the companionship of their own sex.

Foremost among the various guilds were the military companies. The long wars, waged not for aggression but for the defense of their homes against Spanish bigotry, had lent to the profession of arms a seriousness and dignity rarely to be found elsewhere. We do not have to go back to the history of that time to understand the spirit that animated them. In the matchless courage, the dogged determination, the quiet heroism that does prodigies as though they were matters of every day occurrence, displayed by the Boors when defending their homes in the Transvaal against a power infinitely greater than Spain ever was, we have seen what the Dutch citizen-soldier was like — a man to place beside the Spartans of Leonidas.

Bound together by ties of friendship and mutual respect, meeting frequently in their armories or *doelens,* these men naturally liked to be painted together. And thus many portrait groups had been made, which, it must be confessed, are terribly monotonous. Sitting all behind a long table, usually glass in hand and looking straight out at the spec-

tator, no technical ability can enliven the hopeless dullness of the arrangement. Nor was this easy to change. Generally each contributed an equal sum toward the cost of the work, and felt that he was entitled to an equal place upon the canvas.

To so great a poet of the brush as Rembrandt so commonplace a conception was intolerable. He resolved to give his sitters not merely a group of portraits, but a picture — a picture full of animation and suffused with a magic light. Instead of seating them stupidly behind a table, he would represent them in the picturesque disorder of a sudden call to arms. Instead of the garish light of day which hates darkness and drives it ruthlessly away, he would flood the picture with his own magic light, which can coexist with darkness, rendering it still more mysterious and alluring, while the darkness in return heightens the splendor of the light. How gloriously he succeeded, the picture at Amsterdam, which the world at large persists in esteeming his masterpiece despite the preference of his more devoted followers for the *Syndics,* yet remains to attest.

Since it was so admirably cleaned by M. Hopman in 1889, it is hard to understand how it got its name of the *Night Watch.* But its previous condition amply justified the title. Hung for many years in the Doelen amid the smoke of tobacco and peat fires, and then in the town hall under conditions hardly better, many times varnished without removing the soot, it had grown so dark that it appeared indeed to represent a nocturnal scene. Now, however, thanks to M. Hopman, it shines out again in all its pristine splendor, and we see that the action takes place in daylight — not the common daylight of this work-a-day world, but the magic daylight revealed to a poet's eye.

The picture has suffered sadly. When in 1715 it was removed to the town hall, it was cut down at both sides to fit a space between two windows, thus destroying the unity

of the composition. Many used to think that Rembrandt painted it thus, and found in his example a justification of their own vagaries; but the ancient copy in the National Gallery and the contemporary water-color made for Capt. Cocq remain to justify the master.

The *Night Watch* aroused a storm of indignant protest. The members of the company, who had expected to find themselves in conspicuous positions, too often discovered that they were relegated to the rear or not recognizable at all. They felt that the painter had stolen their money; and their wrath found vent in loud abuse. These strange luminous shadows, which persisted in the presence of light, also disconcerted them, and they called the master "the Prince of Darkness." In their matter-of-fact outlook on life, they failed utterly to grasp the poetry of the picture, and saw in it only an unnatural thing, wholly different from what they had a right to expect.

Nor was the general public more favorably disposed; and this great masterpiece, one of the world's most priceless possessions, proved the painter's ruin. Commissions fell away, until there are years when it does not appear that he had a single sitter, and when his only portraits are of himself and members of his family.

To the credit of the Stadholder, however, be it said, he did not desert the master with the rest. In 1646, he commissioned of Rembrandt two pictures, a *Circumcision* that has disappeared and an *Adoration of the Shepherds,* still to be seen at Munich, for which he paid 2,400 florins, the largest sum that the painter ever received. This, however, was the Prince's last commission, and during the twenty-three remaining years of Rembrandt's life — years when he was painting his most wonderful works — the government took no further notice of his existence.

A weaker man would have bent to the storm and would have tried to return to his former lucid manner, where

colors were bright, contours well defined, nature revealed as it appears to common mortals. Instead of this, the master advanced resolutely on the path that he had chosen. Every year his shadows grow at once deeper and more luminous, the transfiguration of common things in a world of magic light becomes more surprising. The colors, once varied and brilliant, gradually become confined to a deep gold, a splendid but low-toned russet, rich browns and greens that shade in with the general scheme and bring out the glory of the chiaroscuro. The honest burghers of Amsterdam looked with open-mouthed astonishment, and went their way, leaving the master to his luminous dreams.

It was hard for him, but for posterity it was a priceless boon. No longer pursued by patrons demanding their portraits, he turned to nature. In his early days he had been content to borrow his landscapes from others. Living in his flat land, he had never seen a mountain, a waterfall, even a respectable hill; yet with such are his backgrounds filled; painted, of course, without conviction or realistic power. But shortly before Saskia's decease his mind was awakened to the quiet beauties of his own land, and he began to etch and paint his native landscapes. Her death drove him rapidly on that path. His home, no longer irradiated by her presence, filled him only with mourning for his loss. A sickly and crying baby rendered it still less attractive, though he loved the child tenderly. No patrons demanded his services, and he sought surcease of sorrow in Nature, the great consoler. An artist to his finger tips, he could see nothing without the desire to jot it down upon his notebooks; and from these he made etchings and paintings that are among the masterpieces of landscape art. The paintings are usually little more than hasty sketches done in oil, but filled with so penetrating an observation that they are to be accounted among master works.

In his etchings he used all known processes, combining them and heightening them with dry-point in a way that is utterly unconventional, but which usually produces the desired result with the surprising aptness of genius; for genius works to its end in ways that common men think not of. He always printed them himself, using a care and skill that are unexampled. By common consent he is ranked as the world's greatest etcher, though his irregular processes, suited only to himself, are usually fatal to his imitators. Conspicuous among his etched landscapes are the *Three Trees* and the *View of Omval,* though there are many scarcely less remarkable. His etchings of figures are perhaps of still greater merit. No one else ever put into black and white such accuracy of modeling, such penetration of character, such sense of light and shade. His homely and affecting etching of the Bible story carried a living comprehension of the sacred volume into the humblest homes, while his etchings of beggars and of the poor brought to the rich a realization of the sorrows and struggles of the humbler classes.

Long after he had ceased to be the favorite of the public, artists continued to realize his worth, and his studio was full. Some of Holland's greatest painters were his pupils in these days of neglect. Nicholas Maes was with him from 1650 to 1653. Carel Frabritius left his studio a few years before. Philips de Koninck was with him till 1646. Samuel van Hoogstraaten worked under him from 1640 to 1650. And there were many others whose names are less well known. Gradually, however, they fell away. Much as they might appreciate his art, they were forced to realize that it was not of a kind to bring the guldens to their purse, and they had to live. So they drifted from his golden dreams to a world that their sitters could comprehend.

It was in these days of ever-increasing neglect that Rem-

brandt painted his greatest masterpieces, those marvelous visions where light penetrates darkness, illuminating without destroying it, and transfiguring everything with a glory that is not of this earth. He becomes at once the poet of darkness and the poet of light, who reveals them as harmonious, not as conflicting powers.

Conspicuous among the masterpieces of this sad period is the *Woman taken in Adultery* of the National Gallery. Rembrandt has transferred the scene from the open road where Christ stooped and wrote in the sand to the vaults of a mighty Gothic temple filled with luminous gloom, while a bright transfiguring light falls upon the Saviour and the repentant sinner.

In the *Christ with the Disciples at Emmaus* of the Louvre, he gives us the most affecting of all presentations of that scene. You can see in the face of the Redeemer that he has passed through the agony of death, and known the horror of the grave. He is indeed one arisen from the dead, not yet to the glory of celestial life, but only to the sorrows of humanity, whose sad burden of mortality he has borne. The fervent faith of one disciple, the yet unconvinced wonder of the other, are also marvelously portrayed.

There are many masterly portraits of these days, though few were paid commissions. Preëminent among these is that of Elisabeth Bas at the Rycksmuseum. So convincing a portrayal of an aged but still vigorous woman, of powerful and keen but not unkindly mind, accustomed to rule her household and to be held in deserved respect, was never painted. It is Rembrandt's masterpiece in a field where his preëminence is beyond contention — the portraiture of elderly women. No one else ever represented them so truthfully or so kindly. All the ravages of time are made apparent, but also the strengthening of the soul that age and sorrow bring.

It is not surprising that Rembrandt preferred to paint the faces of the old. What interested him most in the human countenance was character. The faces of the young have freshness, beauty and charm, but Time has not yet had the opportunity to etch upon them the lines that passion and thought, the soul's aspirations and its abasement, will later draw, revealing in the outward lineaments all that the man has become, much that he has done and suffered.

Singular aberrations of the time are the pictures representing the carcass of a skinned ox hanging in a butcher's stall. The most familiar of these is the one in the Louvre, painted in 1650. One can imagine how an artist might make a hasty sketch of such a thing; but how he could bring himself to waste precious days in making a carefully finished picture of such an object when all nature was offering its beauties to his brush, is hard to conceive. It is impossible to deny our tribute of admiration to the mastery of its execution, or to refrain from wondering why it was done at all.

Meantime at home his affairs were going from bad to worse. He was the most incapable of business men. He never thought of paying a debt, or of caring for the morrow. If he got some money, instead of applying it to his pressing obligations or laying it aside for future use, he spent it in increasing his collections of curios and works of art. The appraisers valued the art objects that he had acquired during the lean years from 1640 to 1650 at 11,000 florins, and he had no doubt paid for them a much higher price.

When he took possession of Saskia's fortune, he made no inventory. Indeed, in December, 1642, he procured an order of court dispensing with the necessity of so doing. As he was bound to account to Titus for one-half in the probable event of his remarriage, this was inexcusable, and in the end it brought him many vexations.

His mismanagement of the inheritance was so conspicuous that in 1647 Saskia's relatives brought suit to compel him to account for her estate, whether in their own interest or on behalf of Titus does not appear. Rembrandt replied that at the time of Saskia's death its value was 40,750 florins, to the best of his knowledge, as we have already stated; and for the time the proceedings dropped. Still he gave no bond, and the court took no steps for his son's protection; no doubt out of respect for the terms of the will.

In 1648 the Peace of Westphalia established the independence of Holland. It had long been an accomplished fact; but this recognition of it by all the world filled the hearts of the Dutch with exultation. The event was celebrated by fêtes and rejoicings. The artists were called upon to add their tribute. Rembrandt, however, had so far sunk out of sight and favor that none called on him. Anxious to assert himself, he began the confused allegorical composition now in Rotterdam called *La Concorde du Pays*. It found no favor and never got past the state of *grisaille*. Nor is the loss great. Rembrandt had no talent for allegory.

After Saskia's death he was fortunate in finding for his delicate babe a devoted nurse in the person of Geertje Dircx, a widow. She grew to love the child almost as a mother, and with tender solicitude watched over it through all the ailments of its frail infancy. On January 24, 1648, she made a will, by which she left all her estate to Titus, save the small amount which the law compelled her to leave to her mother.

She not unreasonably cherished the hope of becoming Rembrandt's wife, since she was already the foster mother of his child. But in 1649 the scene suddenly changes. She revokes the will in favor of Titus, and brings suit against Rembrandt for breach of marriage promise. He

replies in an affidavit attested by two witnesses that she had never been anything save a servant in his house. Next year she becomes violently insane, and at Rembrandt's expense is carried to Gouda and confined in an asylum; so the suit abated. Whether her insanity was due to her blasted hopes, or whether her fallacious hopes were due to her insanity, no one can know.

The reason of the outbreak is not far to seek. Of the two witnesses in Rembrandt's behalf, one was Hendrickje Stoffels, a comely young maidservant from Ransdorp on the Westphalian frontier. Twenty-three years of age, in the fresh bloom of her youth, of a kindly and loving disposition, faithful and devoted, she had found favor in the master's eyes. She bore him a child, which died at its birth, and was buried on August 15, 1652. She was wholly uneducated, and signed her name with a cross; but she was good and intelligent, and she did her best to make her master's home a happy one. Whether Rembrandt ever married her we do not know. Certainly he had not done so on July 23, 1654, when she was summoned before the elders of her church, severely reprimanded, and forbidden the communion table until she should mend her ways. In the following October she bore a daughter, who was again christened Cornelia, after the master's mother. Let us hope that they were then married; but the records of all the churches of Amsterdam have been searched in vain to find an evidence of their lawful union.

Yet there are circumstances which point to a marriage. On October 27, 1661, in one of his numerous law-suits, Rembrandt describes her as his "huysfrouw," or wife, the same title that he had given Saskia. Again, in 1665, Louis Crayers, as guardian of Titus, established against Rembrandt's estate in bankruptcy a claim for half of Saskia's fortune, 20,375 florins, to which, by the terms of the will, Titus would have had no right unless his father had mar-

ried again. We know that Titus' claim was bitterly contested by Rembrandt's numerous creditors, and it seems most unlikely that they should have overlooked so obvious a point. Rembrandt would have been a sorry man if he had not given the protection of his name to the mother of his acknowledged daughter, to the woman who shielded his improvidence and supported him by her industry when all other means had failed. Moreover, he was an affectionate father, and by marrying Hendrickje he would give Titus a right to one-half of his mother's estate as against creditors to whose claims he was always indifferent. Thriftless and improvident, overwhelmed with debt and without social standing, there was no reason why he should not make reparation to the good woman whose life was worn out in his service, and we must hope that he did. Still, we should be happier if we had the proof. It is sad that such a doubt should cloud the fair fame of one of the greatest names in art.

Fortunately we know exactly how Hendrickje looked. In the Louvre she appears in a fine portrait, and again in a magnificent life-size picture as Bathsheba entirely unclothed. Neither in form nor feature is she beautiful; but she is not uncomely. The face is pleasant and attractive, the form immeasurably superior to the wretched creatures who were the only models that Rembrandt could hire for his nude pictures in Puritanical Holland. She is in face and figure perhaps as good looking as Saskia, and she was a stronger helpmate for the master in the lean years that were to follow. Indeed, in the splendid picture in the Louvre where she appears with her child as *Venus and Cupid* she is very charming — a healthy Dutch woman with agreeable features and opulent bosom, who might well please a man more exacting than Rembrandt in his standards of beauty. A portrait of her that is perhaps equally delightful is to be found at Berlin, a masterpiece of the brush.

We know that Hendrickje was faithful and devoted, and that she did her best to save the master from ruin. But the task was hopeless. Nothing could persuade him to paint as his patrons wished; nothing could induce him to seek the favor of the great; nothing could teach him the value of money. As long as it was rolling in as fast as he could spend it, all went well; but when the inflow ceased, he could not cease to spend. And so his fortunes went from bad to worse.

In 1649 he ceased paying interest on his home. Somewhere between 1650 and 1652 he sold to Philips de Koninck the pearl necklace which he had so often painted in his pictures of Saskia. On January 29, 1653, he borrowed of Cornelis Whitsen 4,180 florins, payable in a year. On February 1, following, Thysz, who had received no interest on his debt for four years and had even had to pay the taxes, brought suit against him for 8,470 florins still due on the house. On March 14, 1653, he borrowed 4,200 florins of Isaac Van Heertsbeek, also payable in a year, and about the same time he also borrowed money from his friend Six on the guaranty of one Ludowick van Ludick, who had eventually to pay it. Of course he had no reasonable expectation of meeting these large debts, for his art was bringing in only the most meager returns. With the sums thus borrowed he paid off all the purchase money due Thysz except 1,170 florins, for which he gave a mortgage on the dwelling. On top of all these misfortunes his brother Adriaen had so mismanaged affairs at the ancestral mill that Rembrandt had to come to the aid of his family at Leyden. Indeed, he could never restrain his generous impulses. Baldinucci tells us that he was to be admired less for his noble devotion to his art than for a kindness of heart verging on extravagance.

In the effort to get out of his difficulties, Rembrandt made a singular arrangement with one Dirck van Catten-

burch. In substance, he was to give Rembrandt a smaller house for 4,000 florins, take the house in the Breestreet, pay Rembrandt 1,000 florins in cash, and the latter was to deliver 3,000 florins' worth of pictures and etchings, including an etching of Dirck's brother. What tempted the painter in this was the 1,000 florins in cash. This he duly received, and Dirck no doubt got pictures and etchings of that value, though Rembrandt does not seem ever to have etched the brother, nor to have received the smaller house; while Dirck certainly did not get the big one. Probably all that the complicated transaction resulted in was a sale of works of art for a thousand very welcome florins.

The troubles of these years soon wrought a change in the master's appearance. Instead of the gay young cavalier with upturned mustaches and locks flowing about his shoulders, who held Saskia on his knee and masqueraded in splendid costumes, we see a sad-eyed man of middle age, plainly dressed, with mustache cropped close above his lip, with short hair and a gaze that is weary and world-worn, though still clear and firm. Fortunately, the mania for painting his own portrait continued to the end, so that his features are preserved at every period of his life.

Yet in these evil hours, while darkness was gathering thick about him, the artist in him maintained an untroubled supremacy; and year by year the master advanced in power and in the realization of his glorious dream of wedding light to darkness; becoming each day more amazing in the poetry of his conception of the parts that they should play, more perfect in the production of his luminous shadows.

At last the mismanagement of Saskia's estate became so evident that relatives felt compelled to interfere for the protection of her son. On May 17, 1656, Rembrandt was superseded as guardian of Titus, and Jan Verbout was appointed by the Orphans' Court. To make good in some measure the waste of the inheritance, Rembrandt made

over to Titus his interest in the house. This was a fraud on the men who had lent him the money to pay Thysz on the understanding that they were to hold the house as their security. They brought suit to set the deed aside, and a long litigation followed. Shortly afterwards, on the demand of his creditors, Rembrandt was adjudged a bankrupt, and an inventory was made on July 25th, 1656, of the contents of his home. This inventory still exists. It is curious that among its profusion of artistic objects there were less than twenty books, and only one of these, the Bible, had probably ever been read. The character of the others is such as to indicate that they had been given to him or bought for some reason other than a desire to read them.

Though everything had been seized by the bailiff, Rembrandt was allowed to remain in his home until December of the following year, when he was forced out, and took up his abode at the Crown Imperial Inn. The modest price paid for his lodging has led M. Michel to infer that his family went elsewhere; but that is only a surmise. They may all have lived at the inn in the simple fashion which their circumstances demanded.

Meanwhile, on October 20, 1657, Titus made his will. It never became effective, but it is interesting as showing that the family recognized the master's incapacity for business. Everything was left to Hendrickje and Cornelia in trust for Rembrandt, who was to receive a certain share on condition that he should not use it in paying his debts — a most unnecessary precaution; for the payment of debts was the last thing that the master ever thought of.

The house was finally sold, and brought 11,218 florins, while all its contents, which must have cost fifty thousand, realized but five. We may imagine the despair of the master as he saw the objects which he held so dear and for which he had paid so much going under the hammer at

pitiful sums, and he without a florin to rescue even the most precious. The house still remains, little altered save that it has been divided by a partition so as to accommodate two families.

At last, unable to pay his hotel bill, Rembrandt was forced to abandon the inn, and to seek inexpensive quarters on the outskirts of the town. He found a house in the Rozengracht opposite a pleasure garden called the Doolhof, and here he resided until 1664.

Meantime, Hendrickje and Titus had to do something to earn a livelihood; so on December 15, 1660, they formed a partnership to deal in pictures, engravings and curios, using the master only as an expert in the acquisition of their wares. This partnership continued until Hendrickje's death, and while its profits were in all likelihood modest enough, they served to keep the family going in an humble way.

How completely Rembrandt had passed out of sight is indicated by the fact that when the Guild of St. Luke was reorganized in 1653, he was omitted. His wonderful poems of light were so little understood that he was no longer esteemed to be a painter worthy of a seat in that august body.

Gradually his sight began to fail. We can trace the aging of his vision in his work. His style of painting becomes continually broader. Unable to see close at hand, he is compelled, with the long-sightedness of advancing years, to stand at a distance from his easel, and to apply the paint with a long brush, and in large blotches. Such, however, was his mastery that these adverse conditions only enhanced the power of his art. These later works, seen close at hand, appear but daubs. Stand back at the proper distance, however, and they shine out with supreme power. It was at this period of his life that he said to some connoisseurs who were examining one of his pictures

too closely, "Do not sniff at oil paint; it is not healthy." After 1661, his eyes were too far gone for the use of the needle, and his etchings cease.

In 1660 he painted his *David playing before Saul,* now at The Hague, a masterpiece of broad handling. The splotches of paint, which look so crude close at hand, resolve themselves into the richest harmony at the proper distance.

In the following year he painted what the majority of connoisseurs esteem his masterpiece — the *Syndics of the Drapers' Guild,* now in the Rycksmuseum. How he happened to be entrusted with so important a commission we do not know. He was no doubt admonished that there must be no nonsense this time, as in the *Night Watch,* that the conventional arrangement must be adhered to and shadows abandoned. He did his best to please his patrons. They are seated at a table covered with a red cloth — five grave merchants engaged in the prosaic occupation of casting up their accounts, while a servant stands respectfully behind. Nothing could be simpler; but the magic of genius has made from these simple elements one of the world's great masterpieces. The handling is as broad as in the *Saul and David;* but at the right distance everything resolves itself into a dignified harmony.

What impression the picture made we do not know; apparently very little, for no contemporary comments have come down to us. Accustomed to the minute finish which was then the fashion, people no doubt looked upon it only as a rather clever sketch, good enough for the poor old man who had lost his way among the shadows.

The portraits of these later days are the most wonderful of all. From a luminous gloom that shrouds it in mystery, the figure emerges, lit up by a magic light that reveals not merely the outward lineaments, but the man's inmost soul; telling us what joy and sorrow, failure and

success, have made of him. Unhappily, few of these portraits were commissions. The aging artist, deserted by the world, had to ask others to sit to him as an accommodation, because his tireless energy and his undying quest of truth and beauty would not permit him to be idle.

In 1664 Rembrandt painted one of his greatest masterpieces, the *Unmerciful Servant* of the Wallace Collection. Indeed, it is doubtful whether he ever excelled this miracle of art. The shadows are unsurpassed in their rich luminosity, and the faces of the men emerging from this background so full of mystery and silence, are realized with incomparable force and most intensely characterized. Perhaps no other single picture gives one so full a comprehension of all the master's powers. It was later still, probably in 1668 or 1669, that he produced the *Jewish Bride* of Amsterdam, so rich in its subdued color, so powerfully realized, so marvelously painted. There is nothing Jewish about the picture, which probably represents Titus and his wife, and which shows that, poor and neglected as he was, the great painter grew in strength and splendor till the end.

It is natural that in these dark days Rembrandt's intensely religious mind should have turned to the Man of Sorrows; and it was now that he produced his noblest pictures of the Saviour — pictures in which there is an infinite sadness but great dignity and strength.

In the summer of 1661, the good Hendrickje fell seriously ill, and on August 7 made her will, leaving her property, first, to Cornelia, then to Titus, Rembrandt to enjoy the income during his life. When she died we do not know; some say in 1662, others in 1664. No record of her burial has been found; but she passes out of Rembrandt's life, and death alone could have divided them.

On October 27, 1662, Rembrandt sold the vault in the Oude Kerk where Saskia was buried. What became of

her poor little body is unknown. Let us hope that it found a fitting resting place elsewhere. It was a strange thing to do. Poor as Rembrandt was, we cannot believe that he sold his wife's grave to get money. The pictures which he continued to paint reveal no degradation of his feelings. Perhaps Hendrickje had died, and he bought a burial place for both the excellent women who had lived for him alone. The Oude Kerk was far removed from his present dwelling on the Rozengracht, and he may have wanted Saskia nearer. No record has been found to explain the transaction, and we must give the master the benefit of every doubt.

In 1664 Rembrandt left the Rozengracht and settled in the Lauriergracht. On June 27, 1664, Titus' full claim of 20,375 florins was allowed, but only 6,952 remained. In Holland where the age of majority was twenty-five, he was still a minor; but on the testimony of three witnesses that "by reason both of his business ability and of his exemplary conduct," he was entitled to it, the court on June 19, 1665, declared him of age, and on November 5, 1665, he received what remained of his inheritance. Then they moved back to the Rozengracht, which would lead one to infer that the removal to the Lauriergracht the year before had been under the stress of poverty.

Late in 1667, Titus married his cousin, Magdalena van Loo, and went to live with her on the Singel near the Apple Market, leaving Rembrandt alone with Cornelia on the Rozengracht. It must have been a sad life that the old man led. Coppenol and Six seem to have been faithful to the end; but the world had forgotten him, and none came to have his portrait painted or to buy the wonderful pictures that were in his studio. Yet even in these last days there was one ray of sunshine. When men had ceased to regard him as a painter, Aert de Gelder came to be his pupil, and abode with him to the last. Aert appre-

ciated his genius in full measure, and sympathized with all his aspirations; and the companionship of the intelligent youth must have been a great consolation to Rembrandt in his abandonment.

It is recorded by Baldinucci that he who was once so careful of his dress, had become so slovenly in such matters that he would wipe his brushes on the rear portions of his clothing.

They tell us that in these melancholy days when the world had forsaken him, he would wander among the shops of the Jewish dealers in second-hand clothing, admiring the splendid fabrics that he loved so much and which he no longer had the means to buy, even in their cast-off condition. He had so passed out of sight that some of his contemporaries, writing after his death, explain his disappearance by saying that he had gone to England, while others say that he had moved to Stockholm, where he was painter to the King.

In 1668 or 1669, he painted his last picture save portraits of himself, the *Return of the Prodigal* at St. Petersburg. Was the poor, lonely old man thinking of his son Titus, who had taken his fair young wife and gone away? It is one of his greatest masterpieces, as remarkable for the breadth and power of the execution as for the intensity of the feeling.

Even yet the master's cup of sorrow had not been emptied to the dregs. Within a year after his marriage, Titus died, and on September 4, 1668, he was buried in the Wester Kerk.

Still Rembrandt lived on, but he painted nothing save his own portrait. It was not vanity that drove him to this. Had that been his motive, he would have endeavored to cover up some of the cruelest ravages of time. On the contrary, he is relentless to himself as to others. He gives us year by year the record of his decay. We see a strong

man who from sorrow and for want of exercise slowly goes to pieces. We see the flesh growing each year flabbier, the lines on brow and cheek deepening, all the havoc that outrageous fortune has wrought upon the face once so full of buoyant strength. Only the eyes retain their power. Each year they grow sadder; but they still look out on the world clear, deep-seeing and with no abatement of their inward fire. Even in these melancholy years the taste for painting himself in rich costumes and with varying expressions does not forsake him. The saddest of all his pictures is that at Berlin, where he appears laughing. Tears would not have in them so much of sorrow and disappointment as that forced laugh.

In March, 1669, Titus' widow gave birth to a daughter, who on March 22nd was christened Titia, after her father. Rembrandt was one of the witnesses. Then we lose trace of him until we find this entry in the register of deaths in the Wester Kerk: "Tuesday, 8 October, 1669, Rembrandt van Rijn, painter, on the Rozengracht, opposite the Doolhof. Leaves two children." The inventory drawn up shortly afterward shows that he "left nothing of personal property but some linen and woolen garments and his painting materials." So passed away in poverty and neglect the last of the great masters, and, as many believe, the greatest.

He was buried at a cost of 13 florins at the foot of the staircase leading up to the pulpit on the left hand side as you go up the Wester Kerk. Some years ago, when the pavement of the church was relaid, what was supposed to be his coffin was found half open; but not even the dust of the mighty master remained.

Such was the wretched end of one of the greatest of painters. He had already been so completely forgotten that no contemporary notice of his death has been found. His great-nephew, Wybrandt de Geest, writes: "But a short time ago the ignorance of reputed connoisseurs was

so gross with regard to the admirable works of the mighty Rembrandt, that it was possible to buy one of his portraits for six-pence, as many well-known amateurs and dealers can attest. After a while, however, the price rose to eleven florins, and now one of these powerful works commands several hundred florins." Continually their value has advanced until now half a million has been paid for a single picture, and single etchings have brought ten thousand.

Dr. Bode, who has devoted so much study to Rembrandt, informs us that his paintings number more than six hundred, all done practically by his own hand and without assistance from his pupils, while there are more than three hundred and fifty etchings. This is the best answer to the charges of drunkenness that were made against him in the eighteenth century, when there arose a Rembrandt legend with no foundation save the imagination of his conscienceless biographers.

Fromentin, in his great masterpiece of critical discernment, "Les Maîtres d' Autrefois," which has done so much to make us understand Dutch and Flemish art, finds the answer to the riddle of Rembrandt's painting in the idea that he had a dual nature, that he was a realist and at the same time an idealist, and that the two elements were forever contending for the mastery. It may be so, but we fail to see it. We find no trace of idealism in the ordinary meaning of the term. He never tries to make an object more beautiful than it is. No matter how ugly a face or form may be, he presents it with unflinching realism. What he does is not to idealize, but to transfigure by the power of light. He does not try to improve the object painted, but to make of it a thing of beauty, of abiding charm, by the magic light that he casts about it. This involves no duality of nature, no conflict of opposing elements, such as Fromentin sees. It is a consistent purpose, revealed in the *Presentation in the Temple* of his

earlier days, and persisted in with ever-increasing power to the end.

Rembrandt was probably the greatest master of the brush that ever lived. From the minute finish of his early days to the splendid freedom of his later years he reveals almost every phase of brushwork, and in all he is admirable, while in many aspects he remains unequaled. His pigments are always rich and lustrous; his colors, bright in youth, grow deep and mellow with advancing years. He is alone in his mastery of the luminous shadow, in revealing all the mystery and beauty that are to be found in light and shade. He is also the painter of the air, which surrounds all his figures. They stand out as in life, full of vitality and bathed in atmosphere. Of portrait painters he is the supreme master. Not Raphael with his keen realism, not Titian with his dignity and grace, not Van Dyck with his aristocratic elegance, not Velasquez with his remorseless truth, equals this marvelous Dutchman, who gives us the whole man with all that joy and suffering, passion and thought have etched upon his lineaments. Had he possessed the vision of ideal beauty, Rembrandt would have been the greatest of painters. As it is, none is his superior, and only a few can be placed beside him.

THE END

INDEX

A

Academia Leonardo da Vinci, 38
Adam and Eve, Titian, 173
Adoration of Kings, Leonardo, 19
Adoration of Kings, Rubens, 205, 243
Adoration of Kings, Velasquez, 260
Adoration of Shepherds, Rembrandt, 339.
Adoration of Shepherds, Velasquez, 260
Aerschot, Duke of, 247
Æsop, Velasquez, 298
Aguador, Velasquez, 259
Albert, Archduke, 189, 195, 200, 204, 206, 215, 217, 228
Aldobrandini Marriage, 200
Alexander VI, 47, 143, 163, 164
Alfani Domenico, 99
Alfonso, see Este
Allegory of Louvre, Titian, 158
Altoviti, Bindo, 98, 107
Alva, Duke of, 184, 247
Amboise, Charles d', patron of Leonardo, 54; death of, 56
Ambrose, St., and Theodosius, Rubens, 217
Amsterdam in Rembrandt's time, 314
Anatomy Lesson, Rembrandt, 318
Andromeda, Rubens, 240, 245, 250
Angelico, Fra, 11
Anne of Saxony, 184
Annunciations, Leonardo, 20, 21
Annunciation, Titian, 148
Anthony, St., visiting St. Paul, Velasquez, 300
Antonello da Messina, 131
Antwerp in Rubens' day, 187, 204
Apollo and Marsyas, Raphael, 78
Aretino, Pietro, claims friendship with Raphael, 97; friend of Titian, 145, 151, 152, 154, 162, 174; his death, 176
Ariosto, 93, 138, 145
Artemisia, Rembrandt, 331
Arundel, Earl of, 237
Ascension, Rembrandt, 319
Assumption, Rubens, 243
Assumption, Titian, 147
Atri, Duke of, Titian, 176
Augsburg in Titian's day, 170

B

Bacchanal, Titian, 144
Bacchus, Leonardo, 55
Bacchus and Ariadne, Titian, 144
Baglioni, The, 69, 75, 82
Balthazar-Carlos, Infante, 278, 284, 287
Baptism of Christ, Leonardo, 9
Baptism of Christ, Titian, 137
Baroccio, 195
Bartolommeo, Fra, 43; influence on Raphael, 86
Bas, Elizabeth, Rembrandt, 342
Battle of Cadore, Titian, 142
Battle of Constantine, Raphael, 125
Battle of Lepanto, 180
Battle of the Standard, Leonardo, 48, 193
Beatrice, see Este
Beatis, Antonio di, description of Leonardo, 59
Bella, Titian, 161
Belle Jardinière, Raphael, 88

Bellini, Gentile, 130, 131
Bellini, Giovanni, 130, 131, 132, 134, 140, 141, 146
Bembo, 96, 126, 161
Bernini, 289
Beruete, 284, 303
Bibbiena, 96; his bath-room, 119
Boar Hunt, Velasquez, 282
Bode, Dr., 20, 101, 356
Boll, F., 330
Bolswert, 227
Bonifaccio, 146
Borgia, Cæsar, 41, 46, 47, 65, 70, 143
Borgia, Lucretia, 142
Borrachos, Los, Velasquez, 272
Botticelli, 11, 43, 78
Boy of Vallecas, Velasquez, 296
Bramante, 26, 57, 91, 92, 93, 95, 98, 104, 110
Bramantino, 92, 105
Brant, Isabella, 207, 231, 241
Brazen Serpent, Rubens, 249
Brueghel, "Velvet," 214
Brunelleschi, 7
Buckingham, Duke of, 229, 233, 234, 237
Buen Retiro, 282
Burning of Borgo, Raphael, 117

C

Cadore, 127
Calderon, 270
Calvo, Marco Fabio, 111
Campagnola, Domenico, 139
Cano, Alonso, 235, 277, 296
Caravaggio, influence on Rubens, 194, 199, 200, 243
Carducho, Vincenzo, 268
Castiglione, Baldassare, 67, 87, 95, 110, 111
Catharine, Saint, Raphael, 89
Catarina, mother of Leonardo, 5, 6, 50
Cavenaghi, Cav., 31
Carlisle, Earl of, 237
Castor and Pollux carrying off Daughters of Leucippus, Rubens, 221
Caxesi, Eugenio, 269
Cecilia, Saint, Raphael, 118
Cecilia, Saint, Rubens, 245
Cellini, Benvenuto, 59
Chapeau de Poil, Rubens, 220
Charles I, 122, patron of Rubens, 233, 237, 238; portrait by Velasquez, 265
Charles V, becomes patron of Titian, 157; calls Titian to Milan and Busseto, 162; calls Titian to Augsburg, 169; portraits of him by Titian, 157, 171; recalls Titian to Augsburg, 173; his death, 178; his exumation, 294
Chase, W. M., 254
Chigi, Agostino, 98, 114, 115, 122
Christ bound to Column, Velasquez, 280
Christ at Emmaus, Rembrandt, 342
Christ in House of Martha, Velasquez, 261, 298
Ciarla, Simone di, 68, 112
Clement VII, 124, 157, 159, 160
Cleopatra, Rembrandt, 331
Cimon and Iphigenia, Rubens, 245
Coello, Sanchez, 180
Communion of St. Francis, Rubens, 217
Concert, Titian, 137
Concorde du Pays, Rembrandt, 344
Constable, 275
Conti, Sigismondo, 106
Conversion of St. Paul, Rubens, 218
Cook, Herbert, 127, 134
Copernicus, 35
Coppenol, 327, 353
Cordes, Jacqueline de, 220
Cornelisz, L., 330
Coronation of Charlemange, Raphael, 117
Coronation of Virgin, Raphael, 76
Coronation of Virgin, Velasquez, 300
Corot, 275
Correggio, 120, 176, 199

Corsali, Andrea, 17
Coup de Lance, Rubens, 217
Cranach, Lucas, 172
Creation of Eve, Raphael, 71
Creation of Planets, Raphael, 123
Crivelli, Lucrezia, 32
Crow and Cavacaselle, 69
Crucifixions, Raphael, 71, 76
Crucifixion, Velasquez, 280

D

Danae, Rembrandt, 324
Danae, Titian, 166, 177
Davalos, Marquis, patron of Titian, 158
David playing before Saul, Rembrandt, 351
Death of St. Peter Martyr, Titian, 156
Defeat of Attila, Raphael, 105, 109
Defeat of Saracens, Raphael, 117
Deliverance of St. Peter, Raphael, 105, 109
Descent from the Cross, Rembrandt, 319
Descent from the Cross, Rubens, 210
Desiderio da Settignano, 11
Diana and Actaeon, Rubens, 250
Diana and Callisto, Rubens, 250
Diana and Callisto, Titian, 173
Dianti, Laura, 143
Dircx, Geertje, 344
Disputà, Raphael, 92
Domenichino, 200, 276
Donatello, 11
Doni, Angelo and Maddalena, 84
Donna Velata, 101
Dossi, Dosso, 149
Dou, Gerard, 312
Drinking Satyr, Rubens, 202
Drunken Hercules, Rubens, 202
Dupuis, Pierre, 230, 232
Dürer, Albert, 116, 120, 143, 335

E

Earthly Paradise, Rubens, 214
Eckhout, van der, 330
Elevation of the Cross, Rembrandt, 319
Elevation of the Cross, Rubens, 208
Entombment, Titian, 148
Erecthonius and Daughters of Cecrops, Rubens, 221
Este, Alfonso d', patron of Titian, 142, 144, 149, 160
Este, Beatrice d', 32
Este, Ercole d', 28, 160
Este, Isabella d', visited by Leonardo, 42; painted by Titian, 159
Europa, Rape of, Titian, 173
Everdingen, 251

F

Fabritius, Carel, 341
Fall of the Damned, Rubens, 219
Fall of Rebel Angels, Rubens, 219
Fame crowning Hero, Rubens, 202
Farnese, Pier Luigi, 163, 169
Ferdinand, Archduke, 247, 265
Ferronière, la Belle, Leonardo, 32
Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, 8
Flight into Egypt, Rubens, 221
Flink, Govert, 330
Flora, Rembrandt, 323
Flora, Titian, 146
Florence in days of Lorenzo the Magnificent, 10
Florence in Raphael's day, 78
Florence after Savonarola, 42
Florence, Student life in, 12
Foix, Gaston de, 56
Fornarina, Raphael, 100
Fondaco dei Tedeschi, Titian's work on, 133
Fonseca y Figueroa, 264, 265
Forge of Vulcan, Velasquez, 276
Fourment, Helen, 239, 252, 253
Four Quarters of Globe, Rubens, 203, 220
Francesco, brother to Titian, 129, 178
Francesca, Piero della, 92, 105

Francia, 118
Francis I, 46, 58, 117; portrait by Titian, 159
Frederick Henry, Stadholder, 319, 339
Fromentin, E., 356

G

Galatea, Raphael, 115
Gallerani, Cecilia, 27, 32
Gallileo, 35
Ganymede, Rembrandt, 332
Garden of Love, Rubens, 249
Garland of Fruit, Rubens, 215
Gelder, Aert de, 353
George, St., Raphael, 71, 87
Gerritsz, Harmen, 306, 312
Gevaert, 231
Ghiberti, 9, 12
Ghirlandajo, Domenico, 11
Ghirlandajo, Ridolfo, 21, 43
Giorgione, his influence on Titian, 132, 133, 137, 138, 146
Giotto, 8
Girl in Fur Cloak, Titian, 161
Gloria, Titian, 172
Góngora, Luis de, 264
Gonzaga, Elisabetta, 66
Gonzaga, Federigo, patron of Titian, 150, 152, 157, 161
Gonzaga, Vincenzo, patron of Rubens, 191, 193, 194, 196, 200
Gonzales, Bartolomé, 268
Goritz, Johannes, 97
Goya, 304
Gozzoli, Benozzo, 11
Graces, Rubens, 245
Granvelle, Cardinal, 179
Grimani, Dóge, adoring Religion, Titian, 178
Guercino, 200, 276
Gypsy Madonna, Titian, 134

H

Haro, Luis de, 286, 301
Heliodorus driven from Temple, Raphael, 105
Hendrickje, see Stoffels
Henry III of France, 179
Henry IV of France, 193, 263
Herrera, Francisco de, Master of Velasquez, 257, 277
Holbein, 222
Hogarth, 225, 249
Holy Family of Dresden, Titian, 145
Holy Family of Francis I, Raphael, 123
Homage to Venus, Rubens, 244
Homage to Venus, Titian, 144
Hoogstraaten, van, 341
Horrors of War, Rubens, 251
Houbraken, 309
Hours, Raphael, 120
Huygens, 310

I

Idiot of Coria, Velasquez, 296
Ildefonso, St., Altarpiece, Rubens, 217
Infant Christ and St. John, Rubens, 215, 216
Inghirami, Tomaso, 97
Innocent X, 289
Isabella de Bourbon, 263, 286
Isabella d' Este, see Este
Isabella, Infanta, 189, 206, 217, 228, 234, 235, 236, 246, 247
Isabella of Portugal, 162

J

Jacopo Pesaro adorning St. Peter, Titian, 134
Jerome, Saint, Leonardo, 21
Jerome, Saint, Titian, 156, 179
Jesuits, patrons of Rubens, 216
Jewish Bride, Rembrandt, 321, 331, 352
John Frederick of Saxony, 169, 171
John, Saint, Leonardo, 61
Joseph's Coat, Velasquez, 276, 294
Judgment of Paris, Rubens, 240, 245, 250
Julius II, 66, 102, 105, 106, 139; his character, 90; portraits, Raphael, 101; his death, 107

Jupiter and Antiope, Titian, 173, 180
Jurisprudence, Raphael, 94

K

Kermesse, Rubens, 249
Koninck, P. de, 330, 341

L

Lady at Berlin, Velasquez, 285
Lady with Fan, Velasquez, 285
Lady in Prado, Velasquez, 285
Lancret, 249
Lanzas, Las, 282
Last Judgment, Rubens, 219
Last Supper, Leonardo, 29
Lastman, Peter, master of Rembrandt, 308
Lavinia, daughter of Titian, 150, 168
Leda, Leonardo, 50
Leno, Giuliano, 111
Leo X, 56, 107, 116, 119, 140
Leonardo da Vinci, ancestry, 4; birth, 5; personal appearance and character, 6, 16; enters Verrocchio's studio, 7; *Baptism of Christ*, 9; leaves father's house, 13; *Medusa*, 13; second *Medusa*, 15; his manner of writing, 16; commission for Palazzo Vecchio, 18; *Adoration of Kings*, 19; *Madonna of the Rocks*, 19; *Annunciations*, 20, 21; *St. Jerome*, 22; reasons for leaving Florence, 22; supposed journey in the Orient, 23; goes to Milan, 25; statue of Francesco Sforza, 27; *Last Supper*, 29; *La Belle Ferronière*, 32; *Madonna Litta*, 33; organizer of pageants, 33; Sala delle Asse, 33; his artistic bent, 34; his scientific discoveries and inventions, 35; Academia Leonardo da Vinci, 38; Treatise on Painting, 38; painting of hair, 39; returns to Florence, 42; encounter with Michelangelo, 43; his life in Florence, 45; enters service of Cæsar Borgia, 46; *Battle of the Standard*, 48; on commission to locate the *David*, 49; loses father and mother, 50; lawsuits with brothers, 50, 55; *Mona Lisa*, 50; *Leda*, 53; enters service of Louis XII, 54; *Bacchus*, 55; at Rome, 57; enters service of Francis I, 58; goes to France, 59; appearance in age, 59; *St. John*, 61; his death and testament, 62; influence on Raphael, 80, 85, 87
Lerma, Duke of, 196, 197, 198, 261, 263
Lessing, 231
Leyden in days of Rembrandt, 305, 306
Lievens, 310
Lion Hunt, Rubens, 214, 220
Lippi, Filippo, 11
Lippi, Filippino, 43, 45
Loggie, see Vatican
Lorenzo di Credi, 8, 21, 43
Lotto, Lorenzo, 146
Louis XII of France, 40, 41, 42, 54
Louis XIII of France, 228, 263
Louis XIV of France, 123, 301, 302
Lucas van Leyden, 305, 310
Ludovico, see Moro
Luther, Martin, 101

M

Maderna, Carlo, 111
Madonna with St. Anne, Leonardo, 45
Madonna degli Ansidei, Raphael, 82
Madonna with St. Anthony, Titian, 134
Madonna di St. Antonio, Raphael, 81
Madonna del Baldacchino, Raphael, 89
Madonna Canigiani, Raphael, 88

Madonna with St. Catherine, Titian, 156
Madonna with Cherries, Titian, 135
Madonna of the Diadem, Raphael, 102
Madonna del Divino Amore, Raphael, 107
Madonna of the Fish, Raphael, 116
Madonna di Foligno, Raphael, 106
Madonna with St. Jerome and St. Francis, Raphael, 72
Madonna of the Goldfinch, Raphael, 87
Madonna del Gran Duca, Raphael, 85
Madonna of House of Alba, Raphael, 102
Madonna dell' Impannata, Raphael, 107
Madonna of the Lamb, Raphael, 116
Madonna Litta, Leonardo, 33
Madonna of the Meadow, Raphael, 88
Madonna of St. Onofrio, 57
Madonna of the Rabbit, Titian, 156
Madonna of the Rocks, Leonardo, 19, 20
Madonna Solly, Raphael, 72
Madonna della Sedia, Raphael, 116
Madonna Tempi, Raphael, 87
Madonna di Terranuova, Raphael, 87
Madonna with St. Ulphas, Titian, 135
Magdalen, Rubens, 218
Magdalen, Titian, 157
Madrid in time of Philip IV, 267
Maes, N., 341
Malatesta, Sigismondo, 65
Man with Baton, Titian, 176
Man in Black, Titian, 145
Man with the Glove, Titian, 145
Man with Palm, Titian, 176
Man of Sorrows, Titian (?), 134
Mantegna, Andrea, 132, 192, 193, 238
Mantua in Rubens' day, 192
Maria, Infanta, 276
Marianna of Austria, 291
Marriage of Virgin, Raphael, 77
Mars, Velasquez, 298
Martinez-Montañés, 237, 277, 296
Masaccio, 7, 86
Massacre of Innocents, Rubens, 249
Mazo del, 264, 284, 303
Medici, Cosimo, Pater Patriae, 10
Medici, Cosimo I, 15, 168
Medici, Giuliano, patron of Leonardo, 17, 56, 58, 108
Medici, Ippolito de', 158
Medici, Leonora de', 192, 228
Medici, Lorenzo the Magnificent, 12, 21, 25, 42, 93, 207
Medici, Marie de', 193, 228, 229, 246, 265
Melzi, Francesco, 55, 59, 62
Meleager and Atlanta, Rubens, 250
Meniñas, Las, Velasquez, 297
Mercury and Argos, Rubens, 250
Mercury and Argus, Velasquez, 299
Michael, St., Raphael, 71, 123
Michel, E., 311, 349
Michelangelo, 9, 57, 85, 91, 109, 156, 163, 166, 193, 194; encounter with Leonardo, 28, 43; his *David,* 49; his *Battle of Pisa,* 48, 79; his feeling toward Raphael, 80, 98, 104, 115; his quarrel with Perugino, 80; his influence on Raphael, 104; his opinion of Titian, 166
Milan under Lodovico il Moro, 23
Minerva protecting Peace against War, Rubens, 238
Mino da Fiesole, 11
Miracle of Bolsena, Raphael, 105
Miracles of St. Francis Xavier, 216
Miracles of St. Ignatius, Rubens, 216

Moenippus, Velasquez, 298
Mona Lisa, Leonardo, 50
Money Changers, Rembrandt, 309
Montefeltro, Federigo di, 65, 67
Montefeltro, Guidobaldo di, 66, 86
Morelli, 21, 63, 70, 101, 137
Moretto, 278
Moro, Ludovico il Moro, his character, 24; Leonardo's letter to, 26; his marriage, 32; his fall, 40

N

Nardi, Jacopo, 154, 161
Nasi, Lorenzo, 84, 87
Neptune and Amphitrite, Rubens, 220
Night Watch, Rembrandt, 334
Noort, Adam van, master of Rubens, 188
Nymphs and Satyrs, Rubens, 250
Nymphs and Fawns, Rubens, 250

O

Oath of Leo III, Raphael, 118
Oddi, Maddalena degli, 76
Old Woman with Brazier, Rubens, 221
Old Woman with Candle, Rubens, 221
Oliva, Count de, 205
Olivares, Duke of, 233, 261, 266, 270, 277, 281, 285
Orazio, son of Titian, 150, 178, 179, 182
Ostade, 225

P

Pacheco, Cardinal, 179
Pacheco, Francisco de, Master of Velasquez, 257, 260, 262, 264, 265
Padua, Titian's work at, 139
Palazzo Vecchio, Leonardo's commission for, 18
Palma Vecchio, his influence on Titian, 135, 145
Parma, the Physician, Titian, 145
Parnassus, Raphael, 95
Pater, Walter, 52
Paul III, his election, 160; his character, 163; his portraits by Titian, 165
Paul, St., in Prison, Rembrandt, 309
Peiresc, Claude Fabri, de, 200, 230, 231, 237, 239
Pelisse, La, Rubens, 240, 244
Penni, Giovanni, 104, 119, 126
Peruggia in Raphael's days, 69, 74
Perugino, 8, 12, 43, 68, 72, 73, 75, 77, 80, 82, 92, 102, 149
Perseus and Andromeda, Rubens, 220
Perseus and Andromeda, Titian, 173
Peruzzi, 105
Pesaro Madonna, Titian, 148
Philip II, 127, 156, 172, 173, 177, 178, 179, 181, 184, 196, 256, 267, 318
Philip III, 180, 196, 197, 261
Philip IV, relations with Rubens, 233, 234, 235; relations with Velasquez, 261, 263, 266, 268, 269, 277, 281, 286, 287, 302, 303
Philosopher, Rembrandt, 321
Philosophers, Rubens, 209
Piero, di Cosimo, 43
Pieta, Titian, 181
Pinturicchio, master of Raphael, 73, 78, 91, 92, 102
Pollajuoli, the, 12, 18
Pomponio, son of Titian, 150, 161, 164, 176, 182
Pont, Paul du, 227
Poussin, 276, 289
Presentatum in Temple, Rembrandt, 312
Presentation of the Virgin, Titian, 159
Priscianese, letter about Titian, 154
Prometheus, Rubens, 213
Pulido de Pereja, 284

Q

Quevedo, 270
Quos Ego, Rubens, 248

R

Raimondi, Marc Antonio, 106
Rape of Sabïnes, Rubens, 249
Raphael, 34, 57, his ancestry, 64; his birth, 65; his early training, 68; his earliest pictures, 71; under Perugino and Pinturicchio, 74; *Coronation of Virgin,* 76; *Marriage of Virgin,* 77; at Siena, 78; *Apollo and Marsyas,* 78; goes to Florence, 78; *Madonna di Sant' Antonio,* 81; *Madonna degli Ansidei,* 82; *Trinity,* 82; *Entombment,* 82; Portraits of Angelo and Maddalena Doni, 84; *Madonna del Gran Duca,* 85; *Madonnas of Terranuova, Tempi and Goldfinch,* 87; *Madonnas of the Meadow and Canigani,* 88; *La Belle Jardinière, Madonna del Baldachino, St. Catherine,* 88; goes to Rome, 90; *Disputà,* 92; *School of Athens,* 93; *Parnassus* and *Jurisprudence,* 94; his friends, 95; his amours, 99; the *Fornarina,* 100; *Donna Velata,* 101; *Portraits of Julius,* 101; *Madonnas of House of Alba* and *of the Diadem,* 102; his workshop, 102; his house, 104; influence of Michelangelo, 104; *Heliodorus driven from Temple, Mass of Bolsena, Deliverance of St. Peter* and *Defeat of Attila,* 105, 109; *Madonna di Foligno,* 106; architect of St. Peters, 110; letter to Castiglione, 111; *Sibyls,* 114; *Madonna della Sedia,* 115; *Galatea,* 115; *Madonna of the Fish* and *Lamb,* 116; *Vision of Ezekiel,* 116; *Burning of Borgo,* 116; *Coronation of Charlemagne,* 117; *Defeat of Saracens,* 117; *Oath of Leo III,* 118; *St. Cecilia,* 118; inspector of ruins, 119; his *Hours,* 120; *Lo Spasimo,* 120; *Sistine Madonna,* 120; *Cartoons,* 121; the *Loggie,* 122; *Creation of Planets,* 123; *Holy Family of Francis I and St. Michael,* 123; *Transfiguration,* 124; *Battle of Constantine,* 125; death and burial, 125; Velasquez's opinion of him, 289
Reinach, Salomon, 19
Rembrandt, parentage and birth, 305, 306, 307; his education, 308; earliest pictures, 309; his etchings, 309, 317, 330, 341; association with Lievens, 310; his collections, 311; *Presentation in Temple,* 312; loses his father, 312; his treatment of Scriptural subjects, 313; *Holy Family* at Munich, 313; removal to Amsterdam, 314; early portraits, 316, 320; *Anatomy Lesson,* 318; *Elevation* and *Descent of Cross, Resurrection, Ascension,* 319, 320; *The Philosopher,* 321; *Shipbuilder and Wife,* 321; marriage to Saskia, 321, 323; *Flora,* 321; married life, 324; his homes in Amsterdam, 316, 326, 327, 353; suit with Saskia's brothers, 327; birth of his children, 326, 327, 328, 334; loses his mother, 328; his early style, 329; his pupils, 330, 341, 353; *Sobieski,* 331; *Jewish Bride,* 321, 331; *Artemisia,* 331; *Sacrifice of Isaac,* 331; *Ganymede,* 332; *Samson threatening his Father-in-law,* 333; *Angel Raphael leaving Tobias,* 333; *Manoah's Sacrifice,* 334; *Night Watch,* 334, 336; death of Saskia, 334; loss of popularity, 335, 339; *Adoration of Shepherds,* 339; later

style, 339, 350; his landscapes, 340; *Woman taken in Adultery, Christ at Emmaus,* 342; Elisabeth Bas, 342; financial difficulties and bankruptcy, 343, 344, 347, 348, 349; *La Concorde du Pays,* 344; Geertje Dircx, 344; relations with Hendrickje Stoffels, 345, 346; *Venus and Cupid,* 346; *David before Saul, the Syndics of the Draper's Guild,* 351; later portraits, 351; *Return of Prodigal,* 354; *death and burial,* 355
Reni, Guido, 200, 203, 276
Repose in Egypt, Titian, 156
Resurrection, Rembrandt, 319
Return of Prodigal, Rembrandt, 354
Ribera, Guiseppe, 277, 288
Richelieu, Cardinal, 233, 234, 246, 262, 263, 274
Richter, Dr., 23
Rioja, 270
Robbia, Luca and Andrea, 11
Rockox, Burgomaster, 210, 216
Romano, Giulio, 104, 106, 116, 122, 123, 126, 192
Rome under Julius II, 90
Rome under Leo X, 56
Romulus and Remus, Rubens, 202
Rooses, Max, 201, 209
Rosa, Salvator, 289
Rosselli, Cosimo, 11
Rovere, Francisco Maria della, 66, 89, 117, 160, 165
Rubens, his ancestry, 183; his birth, 186; his education, 187; goes to Italy, 189; takes service with Duke of Mantua, 191; travels in Italy, 193; religious pictures painted in Italy, 195, 198, 199, 200; goes to Spain, 196; returns to Mantua, 198; his acquirements as linguist, 198; meets his brother in Rome, 199; his early pagan pictures, 201; returns to Antwerp, 204; *Adoration of Kings,* 205, 243; appointed court painter, 206; admitted to Guild of Romanists, 206; his first marriage, 207; *Elevation of the Cross,* 208; his home, 208, 221; the *Philosophers,* 209; *Descent from Cross,* 210; his workshop and method of painting, 211, 218; *Prometheus,* 213; *Lion Hunt, Earthly Paradise,* 214; pictures of children, 215; patronized by Jesuits, 216; *Miracles of St. Ignatius* and *of St. Francis Xavier,* 216; *Le Coup de Lance, Communion of St. Francis, St. Ambrose and Theodosius, St. Ildefonso Altarpiece,* 217; *Conversion of St. Paul, Magdalen,* 218; *Fall of Rebel Angels, Last Judgment, Fall of Damned,* 219; *Chapeau de Poil,* Jacqueline de Cordes, *Perseus and Andromeda, Neptune and Amphitrite,* 220; *Erecthonius and Daughters of Cecrops, Castor and Pollux carrying off Daughters of Leucippus, Old Woman with Candle, with Brazier, Venus warming herself, Flight into Egypt,* 221; his attainments and mode of life, 222; *Processions of Silenus,* 224; his engravers, 225; Henry IV and Marie de' Medici series, 228; his writings, 230; loses first wife, 231; mission to Spain, 233; goes to England, 236; decorations for Whitehall, 238; *Minerva protecting Peace against War,* 238; is knighted and returns to Antwerp, 238; second marriage, 239; *Judgment of Paris,* 240, 245; *Andromeda,* 240, 245, 250; *La Pelisse,* 240, 244; his several manners, 243; *Assumption,* 243; *Homage to Venus,* 244; *Cimon and Iphigenia, Three Graces,* 245;

Venus and Adonis, 221, 245; *St. Cecilia,* 245; insulted by Duke of Aerschot, 247; decorations for Archduke Ferdinand, 247; *Quos Ego,* 248; buys Chateau de Steen, 248; *Garden of Love, Kermesse, Rape of Sabines, Brazen Serpent, Massacre of Innocents,* 249; later mythological pictures, 250; *Martyrdom of St. Lieven, Ascent to Calvary,* 250; *Horrors of War,* 251; his landscapes, 251; his death and burial, 252; his relations with Velasquez, 271.
Rubens, Jan, 183, 184, 185, 186
Rubens, Marie Pypelinckx, 183, 184, 185, 187, 190, 203
Rubens, Philip, 187, 196, 199, 204, 209
Rustici, Francesco, relations with Leonardo, 48
Ruysdael, 251

S

Sacred and Profane Love, Titian, 138
Sacrifice of Isaac, Rembrandt, 331
Sala delle Asse, Leonardo, 33
Saint Gaudens, 28
Salai, 39, 42, 45, 59
San Gallo, 12, 57, 110
Sansovino, Jacopo, 153, 154, 167, 176
Samson threatening his father-in-law, Rembrandt, 333
Sannazaro, 97
Santi, Giovanni, 67, 68
Santi, Peruzzolo, 64
Sargent, John, 254
Saskia, wife of Rembrandt, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 334, 352
Savonarola, 43, 93
St. Peters, Raphael made architect of, 110
School of Athens, Raphael, 93
Schwanenburch, Jacob van, master of Rembrandt, 308
Sebastian del Piombo, 165; hostility to Raphael, 98, 117, 124; his death, 169
Sebastian, Saint, Raphael, 76
Sebastian, Saint, Titian, 149
Sebastian de Morra, 296
Selden, 237
Sellajo, Leonardo, 122
Seville in days of Velasquez, 255
Sforza, Francesco, equestrian statute of, Leonardo, 27
Shepherd and Shepherdess, Rubens, 250
Shepherd and Shepherdess, Titian, 181
Shipbuilder and Wife, Rembrandt, 321
Sibyls, Raphael, 114
Siena, visit of Raphael to, 78
Signorelli, 92
Sistine Madonna, Raphael, 120
Six, Jan, 327, 353
Snyders, F., 213
Soderini, Piero, 48, 49, 81, 89
Sodoma, Il, 57, 91, 92, 102
Spinola, marquis, 223, 271, 283
Stanze, see Vatican
Steen, Chateau de, 248
Stoffels, Hendrickje, 345, 346, 350, 352
Strada, Jacopo, Titian, 176
Strozzi, Roberto, 162
Spasimo di Sicilia, Raphael, 120
Supper at Emmaus, Titian, 160
Supper at Emmaus, Rembrandt, 342
Surrender of Breda, Velasquez, 282
Susannah and Elders, Rubens, 250
Syndics of Drapers' Guild, Rembrandt, 351

T

Taddei, Taddeo, 81, 88
Taine, H., 147, 255
Teniers, 225
Three Ages of Man, Titian, 137
Tiber and Abundance, Rubens, 203

Tintoretto, 146, 156, 218, 222, 274, 288
Titian, his birth, birthplace and ancestry, 127; comes to Venice, 129; his artistic training, 131; Giorgione's influence, 132; Fondaco dei Tedeschi, 133; *Jacopo Pesaro adoring St. Peter,* 134; *Man of Sorrows,* 134; *Gypsy Madonna* and *Madonna with St. Anthony,* 134; *Madonna with St. Ulphas* and *Madonna with Cherries,* 135; Palma Vecchio's influence, 135; *The Concert,* 137; *Baptism of Christ,* 137; *Three Ages of Man,* 137; *Sacred and Profane Love,* 138; work at Padua, 139; his broker's patent, 140; *Tribute Money,* 143; *Homage to Venus, Bacchanal* and *Bacchus and Ariadne,* 144; *earlier portraits,* 145; *Holy Family of Dresden,* 145; as landscapist, 145; as colorist, 146; *Flora,* 146; *Venus Anodyomene,* 147; *Assumption,* 147; *Annunciation,* 148; *Pesaro Madonna,* 148; *St. Sebastian,* 149; *Entombment,* 150; his marriage, 150; his dwelling places in Venice, 153; his manner of life, 154, 179; his avarice, 155; *Death of St. Peter Martyr, Madonna of Rabbit, Repose in Egypt, Madonna with St. Catherine,* 156; *St. Jerome,* 156, 179; meets Charles V at Bologna, 157; *Allegory* of Louvre, 158; portraits of Isabella d' Este and Francis I and *Presentation in Temple,* 159; *Supper at Emmaus,* 160; *Venus of Tribune, Bella, Girl in Fur Cloak, Venus with Organ Player,* 161; meets Charles V at Milan and Busseto, 162; portrait of daughter of Roberto Strozzi, 162; *Crowning with Thorns,* 162; portrait of Isabella of Portugal, 162; meets Paul III, 163; is offered the papal seals, 165; visits Rome, 165; portraits of Paul III, 165; *Danæ,* 166, 177; returns to Venice, 167; *Venus and Cupid* of Uffizi, 168; portraits of Lavinia, 168; goes to Augsburg, 169; portraits of Charles V, 157, 171; portrait of John Frederick, 171; returns to Venice, 172; recalled to Augsburg, 172; the *Gloria,* 172; *Venus of Prado, Adam and Eve, Venus and Adonis, Diana and Actaeon, Diana and Callisto, Perseus and Andromeda, Rape of Europa,* 173; returns to Venice, 174; his later style, 174; later portraits, 176; kindness to other artists, 176; *Doge Grimani adoring Religion,* 178; *Battle of Lepanto,* 180; *Venus and Nymphs equipping Cupid, Jupiter and Antiope,* 180; *Shepherd and Shepherdess, Pietà,* 181; his death and burial, 181
Titus, son of Rembrandt, 334, 345, 349, 350, 352, 353, 354, 355
Tobias, Angel leaving, Rembrandt, 333
Treatise on Painting, Leonardo, 38
Transfiguration, Raphael, 124
Tribute Money, Titian, 143
Trinity, Raphael, 82
Triumph of Cæsar, Martegna, 193, 238
Tulp, Dr., 318
Turini, 97

U

Udine, Giovanni da, 119, 122, 165
Unmerciful Servant, Rembrandt, 352
Urban VIII, 266
Urbino in Raphael's time, 65
Uylenborch, Hendrick van, 316

V

Vaga, Perino del, 104
Van Dyck, Anton, 214, 222, 271, 319, 357
Vasari, Giorgio, 9, 13, 46, 52, 65, 68, 99, 103, 104, 133, 165, 166, 174
Vatican Loggie, 122
Vatican Stanze, 92, 105
Vecelli, Gregorio, 128
Veen, Otto van, master of Rubens, 189
Velasquez, visited by Rubens, 235; his ancestry, 254; his birth, 255; his education, 257; his marriage, 259; his *bodegones,* 259; *Water Seller,* 259; *Immaculate Conception, St. John at Patmos, Adoration of Shepherds, of Kings,* 260; *Christ in House of Martha,* 261; his daughters, 264; first visit to Madrid, 264; settles there, 265; becomes court painter, 266; life at court, 267; contest with rivals, 268; early portraits, 271; Rubens' visit, 271; *Los Borrachos,* 272; goes to Italy, 273; *Forge of Vulcan, Joseph's Coat,* 276; at Rome and Naples, 276; meets Ribera, 277, 288; returns to Spain, 277; kindness to brother artists, 277; his change of manner, 277; equestrian portraits of Baltazar Carlos and Olivares, 278; equestrian portrait of Philip IV, 279; his horses, 279; *Crucifixion, Christ bound to Column,* 280; his offices, 281, 293; *Boar Hunt,* 282; *Surrender of Breda,* 282; portraits of middle period, 283; his dogs, 284; Pulido de Pareja, 284; his female portraits, 284; goes again to Italy, 287; at Rome, 289; portrait of Innocent X, 290; returns to Spain, 291; portraits of Marianna of Austria, 291; made *apostentador mayor,* 293; his Impressionism, 295; portraits of Martinez-Montañés and of the court Jesters, 296; *Las Meniñas,* 297; *Las Hilanderas,* 298; *Mœnippus* and *Æsop, Mars,* 298; *Mercury and Argus, Venus,* 299; *Coronation of Virgin, St. Anthony visiting St. Paul,* 300; marriage of Infanta Teresa, 301; death and burial, 303
Venice, on Titian's arrival, 129; in Rubens' day, 190; in Velasquez's day, 274, 288
Venus, Velasquez, 299
Venus and Adonis, Rubens, 221, 245
Venus and Adonis, Titian, 173, 176
Venus Anodyomene, Titian, 147
Venus and Cupid, Rembrandt, 346
Venus and Cupid of Uffizi, Titian, 168
Venus with Mirror, Titian, 179
Venus and Nymphs equipping Cupid, Titian, 180
Venus with Organ Player, Titian, 161
Venus of Prado, Titian, 173
Venus, Toilet of, Rubens, 202
Venus of Tribune, Titian, 161
Venus warming herself, Rubens, 221
Veronese, Paul, 146, 149, 160, 176, 222, 288
Verrocchio, Andrea, master of Leonardo, 7, 8, 9, 10
Victors, Jan, 330
Vinci, Antonio, 4, 5
Vinci, Leonardo da. See Leonardo
Vinci, Piero, 5, 14, 50
Vinci, town of, 3
Vision of Ezekiel, Raphael, 116
Vision of a Knight, Raphael, 71
Viti, Timoteo, master of Raphael, 70, 102, 115
Vorstermann, 227

W

Water Seller, Velasquez, 259
Watteau, 249
William the Silent, 184, 185, 186, 306
Whistler, 254
Woman taken in Adultery, Rembrandt, 342
Wykoff, Prof. 138

Y

Young Englishman, Titian, 145

Z

Zorn, 254
Zuccato, Sebastiano, 131
Zurbaran, 235, 260, 277

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